



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

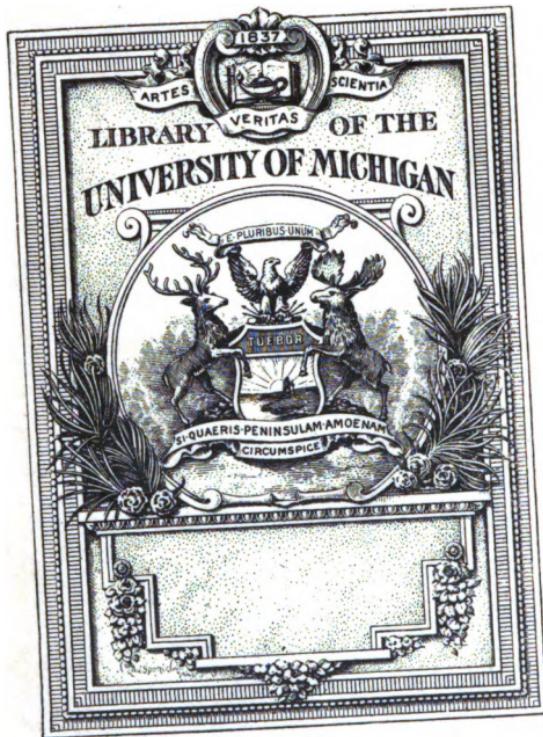
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>











THE  
LECTURES  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,  
AT  
MONTPELIER, VT., AUGUST, 1849;  
INCLUDING  
THE JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS,  
AND  
A LIST OF THE OFFICERS.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BOARD OF CENSORS.

BOSTON:  
TICKNOR, REED, & FIELDS,  
Corner of Washington and School Sts.

1850.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1850, by  
TICKNOR, REED, & FIELDS,  
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

## CONTENTS.

---

	Page
JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS, . . . . .	v
LIST OF OFFICERS, . . . . .	ix

---

### LECTURE I.

THE DEFECT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN MODERN EDUCATION. By JOHN H. HOPKINS, D. D., . . . . .	1
--	---

---

### LECTURE II.

THE EDUCATION DEMANDED BY THE PECULIAR CHARACTER OF OUR CIVIL INSTITUTIONS. By BENJAMIN LABAREE, D. D., . . . . .	27
---	----

---

### LECTURE III.

EARNESTNESS. By ROGER S. HOWARD, . . . . .	59
--	----

---

### LECTURE IV.

THE ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION. By THOMAS H. PALMER, . . . . .	79
---	----

## LECTURE V.

THE CLAIMS OF NATURAL HISTORY AS A  
BRANCH OF COMMON SCHOOL EDUCATION.

BY WILLIAM O. AYERS, . . . . . 119

---

## LECTURE VI.

EDUCATION—THE CONDITION OF NATIONAL  
GREATNESS. BY PROF. E. D. SANBORN,

149

---

## LECTURE VII.

THE DUTIES OF LEGISLATURES IN RELATION  
TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED  
STATES. BY REV. CHARLES BROOKS,

175

---

## LECTURE VIII.

PRACTICAL EDUCATION. BY W. C. GOLDTHWAIT, 193

# AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

## TWENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING.

---

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

MONTPELIER, VT., AUG. 14, 1849.

The Institute met in the First Congregational church, and, in the absence of the President, was called to order at 10 o'clock, A. M., by G. F. Thayer, Esq., one of the Vice Presidents.

Prayer was offered by Rev. E. J. Scott, of Montpelier.

The Secretary being absent, Charles Northend, of Salem, was chosen Secretary *pro tem.*

Mr. Thayer made a very appropriate introductory address, after which R. S. Howard, Esq., in a brief and happy manner welcomed the Institute to the Green Mountain State.

W. D. Swan, of Boston; R. S. Howard, of Vermont; Charles Northend, of Salem; S. W. King, of Lynn, and Nathan Metcalf, of Boston, were appointed a Committee to nominate a list of Officers for the ensuing year.

Messrs. May, of Vt.; Leach, of N. H., and Wetherell, of N. Y., were appointed a Committee to report the doings of the meeting for the various papers in the State.

*Voted*, That gentlemen of the press be invited to take seats at the table.

At 11 o'clock, Rev. Dr. Hopkins, of Burlington, gave the Introductory Lecture. His subject was "*Religious Instruction*."

Hon. Mr. Smith, of Montpelier, invited the members of the Institute to avail themselves of the hospitality of the citizens.

Adjourned.

2 o'clock, P. M. Met per adjournment.

The subject of the morning Lecture was discussed by Messrs. Greenleaf and Field, of Mass.; Henry and Jenner, of N. Y., and Forbes, of Vt.

At 3 o'clock, Prof. Shedd, of Burlington, gave a Lecture on "*The Relative Position and Influence of Collegiate Education in a Complete System of State Education*."

The subject of "*School Discipline*" was discussed by Messrs. Henry, of New York; Morse, of Nantucket; Swan, Greene and Field, of Boston, and others.

*Voted*, To adjourn till 7 o'clock.

Tuesday evening, 7 o'clock. Met per adjournment.

The afternoon discussion was resumed and continued by Messrs. Greenleaf, of Brooklyn; Northend, of Salem, and Tufts, of Vermont.

At 7½ o'clock, Pres. Labaree, of Middlebury, gave a Lecture on "*The Education Demanded by the Peculiar Character of our Civil Institutions*."

*Voted*, To adjourn till 8½ o'clock to-morrow morning.

Wednesday morning. At 8½ o'clock met per adjournment.

Prayer offered by Pres. Labaree.

It having been announced that the Hon. Henry Bar-

nard, of Connecticut, contemplated the preparation of a "History of Education," it was

*Resolved*, That we have the utmost confidence in Mr. Barnard's ability to prepare a History of Education, and that we will afford him every aid within our power.

Messrs. Northend and Greene, of Mass.; Howard, of Vt.; Prof. Sanborn, of N. H., and Jenner of N. Y., were appointed a Committee to confer with Mr. Barnard.

At 9 o'clock, Mr. Wm. O. Ayers, of Boston, delivered a Lecture on "*The Claims of Natural History as a Branch of Common School Education.*"

Prof. Eaton, of Middlebury, made some very interesting remarks upon the subject of the Lecture.

11 o'clock. Mr. W. C. Goldthwait gave a Lecture on "*Practical Education.*"

Wednesday, P. M. The Annual Reports of the Treasurer and Censors were laid before the Institute.

*Voted*, That the Directors be instructed to take measures to procure the renewal of the annual grant of \$300 from the Massachusetts Legislature.

Hon. H. Barnard, of Connecticut, being called upon, made some very interesting and spirited remarks upon Education.

At 3 o'clock, Mr. Thomas H. Palmer, of Pittsford, delivered a Lecture on "*The Essentials of Education.*"

Lecture discussed by Messrs. Brooks, of Boston; Labaree, of Vermont; Greenleaf, of Brooklyn; Marsh, of Groton, and Batchelder, of Lynn.

On motion of Mr. Barnard, Mr. Shattuck, of Cincinnati, was invited to make some remarks upon "*Teaching Drawing in Common Schools.*"

Adjourned.

Wednesday evening, 7 o'clock. Met per adjournment.

The subject of Natural History was discussed by Messrs. Greenleaf, of Bradford; Tufts, of Vt.; Ballou, of Montpelier, and Brooks, of Boston.

At 8 o'clock, Prof. E. D. Sanborn, of Hanover, gave a Lecture on "*Education, the Condition of National Greatness.*"

Adjourned.

Thursday morning, at 8½ o'clock, the Institute was called to order by the President, and prayer offered by the Rev. Mr. Pease, of Waterbury, Vt.

At 9 o'clock, Rev. Dr. Sears, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, delivered a Lecture on "*The Uses of Imagination, in Schools and Real Life.*"

At 10½ o'clock, an Address on the subject of "*Teachers' Institutes,*" was made by Hon. Henry Barnard, of Connecticut.

On motion of Rev. Mr. Brooks, of Boston,

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Institute be tendered to Mr. Barnard, for his excellent address.

At 11 o'clock, a Lecture on "*Earnestness,*" was given by Roger S. Howard, of Thetford, Vt.

Adjourned.

P. M., 2 o'clock. Met per adjournment.

By request, Mr. Barnard made some useful remarks upon the "*Classification of Schools.*" Mr. Bishop, of Providence, and Mr. Allen, of Boston, made remarks on the same subject.

Adjourned.

Evening, 7 o'clock. Institute met per adjournment, and was called to order by Mr. Field, one of the Vice Presidents.

The balloting for Officers for the ensuing year resulted in the election of the following list, viz:—

## PRESIDENT.

Gideon F. Thayer, Boston.

## VICE PRESIDENTS.

Thomas Sherwin, Boston.  
John Kingsbury, Providence, R. I.  
Barnum Field, Boston.  
Samuel Pettes, "  
Horace Mann, Newton, Mass.  
Benjamin Greenleaf, Bradford, Mass.  
William Russell, Merrimac, N. H.  
William B. Fowle, Concord, Mass.  
Solomon Adams, Boston.  
Henry Barnard, Hartford, Ct.  
Edwin D. Sanborn, Hanover, N. H.  
William H. Wells, Newburyport, Mass.  
Richard S. Rust, Northfield, N. H.  
Alfred Greenleaf, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Nathan Bishop, Providence, R. I.  
William D. Swan, Boston.  
William G. Crosby, Belfast, Me.  
Roger S. Howard, Thetford, Vt.  
Samuel S. Greene, Boston.  
Benjamin Labaree, Middlebury, Vt.  
E. J. Scott, Montpelier, Vt.  
Barnas Sears, Newton, Mass.  
William Slade, Middlebury, Vt.  
Worthington Smith, Burlington, Vt.

## RECORDING SECRETARY.

Charles Northend, Salem, Mass.

## CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES.

Charles Brooks, Boston.  
George Allen, Jr., "

## TREASURER.

William D. Ticknor, Boston.

## CURATORS.

Nathan Metcalf, Boston,  
William O. Ayers, "  
Samuel Swan, "

## CENSORS.

William J. Adams, Boston.  
Joseph Hale, "  
J. D. Philbrick, "

## COUNSELLORS.

Rufus Putnam, Salem, Mass.  
Amos Perry, Providence, R. I.  
Daniel Mansfield, Cambridge, Mass.  
S. W. King, Danvers, Mass.  
D. P. Galoup, " "  
Leander Wetherell, Rochester, N. Y.  
M. P. Case, Newburyport, Mass.  
Jacob Batchelder, Lynn, Mass.  
Elbridge Smith, Cambridge, Mass.  
Ariel Parish, Springfield, Mass.  
D. P. Thompson, Montpelier, Vt.  
Solomon Jenner, New York.

At the request of the Institute, Gov. Eaton, of Vermont, addressed the meeting on the subject of "*Schools in Vermont.*"

Mr. Hall, of Craftsbury, also made remarks.

After singing by the choir, Rev. C. Brooks, of Boston, lectured on "*The Duties of Legislatures in Relation to Schools.*"

On motion of Rev. Mr. Brooks, it was

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Institute be tendered to G. B. Emerson, Esq., and other Officers who have served the Institute during the past year; to the First Congregational Society of Montpelier, for the use of their Church; to the choir, for their excellent music during our session; to the citizens of Montpelier, for their very kind and liberal reception; to the Committee of Arrangements in Montpelier; and to the several rail-road and steamboat companies which have favored us.

On motion of Mr. Ticknor,

*Resolved*, That the thanks of the Institute be tendered to those gentlemen who have favored us with Lectures on the present occasion, and that they be requested to furnish copies for the press;—also to editors who have gratuitously announced our meeting.

Mr. Thayer, the President, made a few very interesting and appropriate remarks, adapted to the close of the session.

*Voted*, That 300 copies of the Vermont School Journal be purchased by the Institute, for distribution.

After singing by the choir, the Institute adjourned, *sine die*.

CHARLES NORTHEND, *Rec. Sec.*



## LECTURE I.

---

THE

### DEFECT OF THE PRINCIPLE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN MODERN EDUCATION.

---

BY JOHN H. HOPKINS, D. D.,  
OF BURLINGTON, VT.

---

GENTLEMEN,

I knew not to what cause I am indebted for the kind request, which brings me as a lecturer before the American Institute of Instruction. Certain, indeed, it is, that during thirty years of a busy and checkered life, I have been engaged, more or less actively, in the work of education. And I may venture to add, that few men can be found who have thought more anxiously of its importance and its difficulties. But I have taken no prominent part in its popular forms. I have held no office amongst its influential promoters. I have offered no valuable contribution to its literature. I have gained no name on the list of its benefactors. My toils and labors have been chiefly confined to the home department; and the schools which I have attempted to establish—

to my own most serious loss—were only designed to carry out the principles of parental responsibility, as they appeared to be inculcated in the word of God. To the public I made no appeal. Nor had I any reason to suppose that my opinions on the subject could ever be drawn into sufficient accordance with the spirit of the age to bear the stamp of popularity.

Of the peculiar merits or defects of popular systems of education, therefore, my personal experience would qualify me to say but little. And hence, although I have accepted the invitation of your Secretary, lest I might appear unfriendly or indifferent to the high and patriotic objects of your Association, yet I have done so under a lively apprehension, that the position of a hearer would become me far better than that of a speaker, in an assembly like this.

With these impressions on my own mind, I can hardly hope to make any offering of importance to your treasury of knowledge. All that I propose to myself is to set before you some thoughts on the most serious defect which seems to characterize the work of instruction in our age and country, although I frankly confess that I am not prepared to say whether it is of a kind which is likely to admit of any effectual remedy.

The true definition of education is conveyed to us with equal exactness and simplicity, in the inspired precept of Solomon: "Train up the child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." But what way is this? The answer is obvious, when we consider the two-fold character of our existence, mortal and immortal. As mortal

beings; designed to live and labor for a short course of years on earth, the knowledge of language, art and science, to a certain extent, is necessary. And this indicates the ordinary range of intellectual and physical culture, which is commonly called education. As immortal beings, however, destined to another and an endless life beyond the grave, for which the present world is only intended to be a preparation, the knowledge of religious truth, and of morals as founded on religion, is yet more necessary, because the object of such knowledge transcends the objects of all other learning, to an extent beyond comparison. Who can measure the difference between earth and heaven? Who can estimate the degrees between time and eternity?

I stand not here this day to discuss points of theology. I am fully aware that there are some who consider the future life as a state of assured happiness to all men, so that there will be no final distinction between the righteous and the wicked—between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. But this is the opinion of a very small minority amongst professed Christians. The vast mass of those who take the bible for their guide, believe that the felicity of the world to come is only promised to the faithful followers of the Redeemer. And I am authorized to suppose, that the Institute which I have the honor to address, accord in sentiment with the language of the only unerring Teacher, when he saith that "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat. For straight is the gate and narrow is the way that lead-

eth unto life, and few there be that find it." I need not remind this intelligent auditory, that the same divine Instructor expressly sets forth a judgment after death, when every soul must appear before His tribunal—when the true and consistent disciples of his gospel shall be appointed to eternal joy, and all the rest shall be sentenced to everlasting ruin.

To train up the child in the way he should go, therefore, includes, of necessity, the duty of teaching him the knowledge and the habits which belong to the Christian religion. And the question at once arises: Can the work of education be properly conducted which omits or runs counter to this paramount science of eternal life? Can the intellect be cultivated successfully without the heart? Can morality be rightly inculcated, without the supreme motives to morality? Can the usefulness and the success, the permanent dignity and honor of the individual be secured, by raising a superstructure of mental acquirement and ability, without attending to the foundation of religious principle on which it should be based? A more serious and practical inquiry can hardly be suggested to a reflecting mind. How shall it be answered to the satisfaction of the professional teacher? What bearing should it have upon the modern system of instruction?

In the arrangement of Providence, the training of the child is committed, as a general rule, to the father. The relation of parent and child is the peculiar work of God, and to him we must answer for our fulfilment of its obligations. But in the arrangements of social life, parents, for the most part, act upon the

assumed theory of a division of labor. They think that they transfer their religious responsibility, by sending their children to the Sabbath school. They think that they transfer their intellectual responsibility, by sending them to the district school and the academy. They pay a certain tax for both these imaginary substitutes, and in that payment they suppose that they have discharged their duty. And yet, while they fancy that they have transferred their accountability, they never transfer that without which the obligation cannot be fulfilled. They retain, in their own hands, the whole of their parental authority. They expect the pastor and the teacher to do their work, without the power which the work requires. And if their children be not educated to their mind, they blame their supposed substitutes, when they ought, in strict justice, to blame themselves.

There would be no objection to these arrangements, if parents regarded the pastor and the teacher as their assistants, to do a certain portion of the training of the child, instead of their substitutes, to do the whole. Neither would there be any objection to their retaining all their parental authority, if they did not fall into the serious error of neglecting to exercise it, in the discharge of their own appropriate duty. For they cannot get rid of their responsibility. It is to the father himself that the inspired sage addresses the precept: "Train up the child in the way he should go." It is to the work of the father himself that the result is promised: "And when he is old, he will not depart from it." It is to the father himself that the Almighty saith: "Thou shalt teach these things to

thy children, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." And to arm the parents with the authority necessary for success, the omnipotent Lawgiver speaks to every child, saying: "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." He commits to the parent's hand the rod of correction, and he denounces against the disobedient and rebellious son, the sharpest chastisements of divine justice. Now can it be believed that the father is at liberty to hold such powers, while he neither uses them himself, nor commits their exercise to any other? If the pastor and the teacher be engaged to assist in the imparting of instruction to the child, is the father not bound to see that their instructions are effectual? Must he not take care that the teaching of the Sabbath is practised at home throughout the week? that the teaching of the school is faithfully improved in the hours of leisure? that the child is really advancing in the way that he should go, under the pure motives of religious and filial duty? And shall the father escape from this solemn responsibility to God, because he pays a miserable pittance in the shape of a school tax and a church subscription? Will the Almighty accept a commutation of ten or twenty dollars a year, as an equivalent for obedience to those laws, which are the only sure safeguard to the best interests of man, both in time and in eternity?

But the error under consideration is open to rebuke, on the further ground of injustice. Parents have no

right to expect, from ministers and teachers, what neither minister nor teacher ever promises to perform, except in the case of orphan children, or those who are sometimes under peculiar circumstances, committed to their entire and exclusive care. The preacher of the gospel is not the substitute of the father, but the servant of Christ; and the church is the school of religion to the old as much as to the young, so long as this life continues. The same doctrine of immortality is announced to all alike, on the same authority of heaven; and although a different mode of teaching may be adopted towards the children in the Sunday school, on account of their incapacity to understand the ordinary language of sermons, yet, in the substantial meaning of the truths conveyed, there is, and there can be, no conceivable distinction. The powers of the minister, properly considered, are not of man, but of God; and parents as well as children are bound to hear and follow his instructions at their own peril, provided they be in accordance with the Scriptures. By what right, then, can a father look upon the minister as his substitute, in the teaching of his child, when he himself is placed equally in the same school, and under the same instructor? By what right does he presume to imagine that he has transferred his obligations to the preacher, when the whole work of the preacher is already allotted to him by his divine Master, and all the world are unable to enlarge or diminish, in one iota, the terms of his commission? By what right does the parent suppose that he can cast any portion of his responsibility on the minister, when

the same bible which commands the duty of the minister, commands the duty of the father too ?

And as a general rule, the teacher of the school or the academy is equally free from the responsibility of parental obligation. He undertakes no such duty, he is paid for no such duty, and it is a manifest injustice to expect it of him. He merely promises to give all requisite instruction in certain branches of human knowledge, and to preserve the necessary order during those hours when his pupils are committed to his care. He assumes neither the father's name, nor the father's powers, nor the father's office. All these remain where the God of nature and of grace has placed them, and what right has man to divert them from their proper channel ?

In addition to the impiety and injustice of this error, so common in our day, I would next observe its absurdity. The training of the child in the way he should go, demands the principle of authority. First, the authority of God, as supreme, to which all others must be strictly subordinate. Secondly, the authority of the father and the mother, who stand next after God, in their relations to the child. Thirdly, the authority of the minister, which is a peculiar and special agency under the commission of Christ. And fourthly, the authority of the teacher, who is employed to assist the parents in a certain specified circle of regular instruction. The success of the work of education can be expected only by the harmonious combination of the whole four. On the just and true recognition of them all, according to their due proportions, and on nothing else, have we the assurance of an effectual

blessing. Can there be any miscalculation, then, more grossly absurd, than the confidence placed in the last alone, without the authority of God, of the parent, or of the minister? Can any thing be more preposterous than to apply the term education to the mere acquirement of certain respectable branches of human knowledge, without the slightest practical connection with the motives or the principles of the conscience or the soul? Can any error be more indefensible than to form the intellect, without guiding the affections? to cultivate sedulously the mortal, to the sacrifice of the immortal? to labor solely for the selfish competitions of this feverish life, in wealth, in learning or in eloquence, while the duties from which we can alone hope for solid peace here, or for happiness hereafter, are thrown out of the account, as if they needed no attention? As if reverence and devotion, piety and holiness, truth and love, justice and temperance, were the spontaneous products of our nature, and would grow up of themselves, at the proper time, in the soil of worldly expediency!

But the error of parents, in seeking to cast their responsibilities on others, and neglecting to employ for the benefit of their children the authority which God has expressly conferred, is not a solitary error, confined to the circle of domestic life, or to the period of education. On the contrary, it seems, in my humble judgment, to be only a part of the cardinal and universal error of the age, which stands in bold relief upon every institution of our land, and in every relation of society. Many are the changes which we have witnessed, since the opening of this eventful

nineteenth century. And some of them are confessedly of vast importance, and prove—if they prove no more—the wonderful advancement of the human mind in philosophical, medical and mechanical discovery. But no change has been so great—none so prolific of consequences—as the change which has come over the principle of authority. The word has lost its force upon mankind. In the days of our fathers, it was a word of power. Christians bowed down before the authority of the bible, and paid a true respect to the office of the ministers of God. Wives thought it their duty to reverence the authority of their husbands. Children revered the authority of their parents. Scholars revered the authority of their teachers. The people revered the authority of the laws. Citizens revered the authority of their rulers. There was authority in the church, authority in the family, authority in the school, authority in every thing. How is it now? It is avoided, disliked, unpopular. We seem to have arrived at the last days, when the apostle predicted that “perilous times should come,” when men should be “lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof”—“ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Influence is all, and authority is nothing. The wisdom of antiquity is a jest, and mankind laugh at the claims of prescription. The son leads the father, the daughter leads the mother, and he is ac-

counted the best husband and the best parent, whose family do precisely as they please. Discipline has thrown away the rod, and gives up her right in despair, to the claims of moral suasion. No school can succeed unless it be popular with the scholars, for boys and girls have learned to judge their teachers, and the pupils must be satisfied, or the parents cannot be content. The majesty of law bends before the private notions of jurors, and there is no certainty that the greatest criminals may not escape, because it suits some one or two individual minds to fancy themselves wiser than the legislature. Socialism and Fourierism openly denounce all the established relations of society, and the rights of property and the bonds of wedlock are accused as so many modes of usurpation. All the old systems of thought and action are assailed in the thirst for novelty. The science of government, the art of medicine, the forms of jurisprudence, the style of history, nay, the settled rules of orthography, are attacked by new and imposing theories of improvement; and the argument of established usage, once regarded as an evidence of truth, seems now to be despised, as if it were rather an indication of error. Such is the spirit of the age, so actively at work throughout the civilized world. No wonder that the social duties, the maxims of domestic order and peace, the laws of parental and filial obligation, the course and instrumentalities of schools, and even the high and solemn realities of religion, should feel its power. The *object* is progress. The *effect* is change. And so seducing is the movement, so gratifying the stimulus, that the whole machinery of life is thought to de-

pend upon the charm of reconstruction; and every thing falls into the sleep of apathy, or the weariness of disgust, when it ceases to be urged forward by the hand of innovation.

Far be it from me, however, to insinuate that this wide-sweeping impulse, which has now extended almost over the whole globe, has done no good. Doubtless there were many old abuses to rectify, many time-honored errors to expose, many absurd customs to abolish. In no department had such perfection been attained, that improvement should be discouraged as impossible. But some truths there are, which should be regarded as sacred, because they are not the result of human discovery. Some laws there are, which should be venerated, because they are proclaimed on the authority of God, the supreme Legislator. All else I am ready to abandon to the popular current, but these should rest unmoved, as the heritage of that church which is built upon the rock of ages. In all else, I am willing to allow that man may improve what man has established; but the doctrines of religious faith, the maxims of parental and filial duty, and the principles of education which are to qualify our race for the higher ends of their being—these should be respected as the revelation from heaven. They have their source in the wisdom of eternity. Their object is to fit us for eternity. And woe be to that spirit which refuses to reverence their claims, and rushes on in the thoughtless appetite for change, without pausing to reflect upon the difference between the unerring dictates of God, and the weak and fallible judgments of mortality.

But it is one thing to declare the evil, and quite another to suggest the cure. For myself, I am bound to confess that I have small hope of any return to the old and scriptural rules of filial duty and parental authority. The children of the rising generation might easily be taught to obey, but the fathers cannot be taught to govern; and the few exceptions which here and there remain, are far more likely to be censured for their singularity, than to be followed as examples. Power once abandoned, can hardly ever be resumed without the struggles of a revolution. And a revolution in the domestic looseness of our age is no more to be expected, than the flowing back of the stream to its fountain. Yet society continues. Mankind increase and multiply. Education goes on without its former main-springs—the authority of the parent, and the willing obedience of the child. The object of that education should be still the same—the training of the young for time and for eternity. How shall it be accomplished? How shall the instrumentalities within our reach be so employed, that the great result may be secured, notwithstanding the fearful loss of the intended agency?

Here, precisely, is the point, at which your Institute appears to me to assume its vast importance and magnitude. The teachers of our day are forced into a new and most unfair responsibility, by the very defect of parental government; and that defect must either be supplied in some degree by them, or else their work must be performed without the aid of its highest and holiest principles. Although, of right, they should only be expected to assist the father to a

limited extent, and ought not to be regarded as his substitutes, since they have neither his name nor his authority, yet, so long as they are the only resource on which reliance can be placed, is it too much to ask that they will regard their task with a view to the existing deficiency, and labor to fulfil it, so that their pupils may still be trained in the way they should go,—the way of successful candidates for the happiest lot, not only in this life, but in the life to come? In other words, is it too much to ask that the teachers of our land shall submit to the necessity imposed upon them by the prevailing spirit of our day, and earnestly endeavor,—since *authority* is lost—to use their best *influence* in favor of religion?

I am well aware that many objections may be raised against this proposition. It may be said that religious instruction belongs not to the office of the secular teacher,—that his school must usually consist of many diversities of sentiment—that he could not undertake to enlighten one, without offending another—that his own creed might differ seriously from that of the majority, and possibly from the whole—that he ought not to lay himself open to the charge of invading the office of the pastor or the minister, to whom religious instruction of right belongs; and therefore that it is necessary, for peace' sake, and for the full success of his proper vocation, that he should have nothing to say to his scholars upon the subject, but should confine himself strictly to his expected limits, and attempt no more than he has formally undertaken. Let me bespeak the indulgence of my respected auditory, while I endeavor to prove, that

the course which I recommend is not fairly liable to any of these difficulties, but, on the contrary, is perfectly consistent, and even necessarily connected with the highest duties of the profession itself, and with the best interests of the rising generation.

It is true, doubtless, that religious instruction belongs officially to the ministry of Christ, but it is not true that it belongs to them exclusively. So far from it, that every man is bound to give it all the aid he can, according to his opportunities, by the whole tone of his life and conversation. To the pastor is indeed committed the public work of expounding, doctrinally as well as practically, the word of God. To his official care and oversight, the entire congregation, young and old, male and female, is delivered. But surely this does not forbid the husband and the wife to help the piety of each other, nor to teach their children the way that they should go, in the private family circle. It does not forbid them to lead their domestics to the kingdom of heaven, by good advice, by a religious example, and by prayer. It does not forbid the kindly and affectionate counsel of friend to friend, nor the words of spiritual consolation in their visits to the sick and the afflicted. On the contrary, the gospel demands all this of every believer, as the fruits of his faith, and no man can be a practical and consistent Christian without thus causing his light to shine before the community where Providence has placed him. How then shall the teacher be exempt, on Christian principles, from a kindred influence for good, amongst those scholars, which are entrusted for

so large a portion of their lives, to his especial oversight?

It is true, likewise, that every school may be expected to exhibit many varieties of religious sentiment, and hence, the instructor could not be asked to meddle with topics of controversy, lest that which might be acceptable to one, might be offensive to the rest. But this is neither necessary nor advisable, under any ordinary circumstances. Happily for the interests of religion, Christians, after all their disputes, may find far more points of agreement than of difference, if they will but try to look for them. They all agree that the bible contains the written word of God—that they have but one Mediator and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ—that the moral precepts of the gospel are of the highest obligation—that the Almighty is the searcher of the heart—that in His sight, the true character of every word and act is determined by the secret motive—that we are entirely dependent, for all our success and happiness, upon His providential care and blessing—that we are bound to seek that blessing, through Christ, by a faithful devotion to His will—that this world is allotted to us as a preparation for the world to come—that it is a scene of discipline, labor and toil, mingled with a large share of suffering and sorrow—that perfect happiness and enjoyment are only to be reached beyond the grave, but that he is the happiest, even in this life, whose principles and affections are most truly submitted to the authority of God—that all, young and old, without exception, are indebted to His goodness for every privilege, whether it be of

talents or opportunities, friends or relatives, wealth or station, influence or power; and that for the use they make of their advantages, the Lord will hold them strictly accountable—that the highest and only pure motives of action are love to God and love to man—that religion is the best gift of the Almighty to our sinful race, and must be cultivated, from childhood to the hour of death, by a diligent attendance upon the appointed means of grace, by keeping holy the Sabbath day, by the faithful use of the sacrament ordained by Christ, by frequent and diligent examination into the state of the heart, by the habit of constant watchfulness over our motives and our conduct, by earnest prayer for the aid of the Holy Spirit, and by the active temper of kindness and benevolence—that the life of the Redeemer himself is our only faultless example, and that therefore we should constantly endeavor to imitate this divine model, forgiving our enemies, avoiding pride, envy, malice, revenge and selfish emulation, keeping our animal appetites and passions in subjection to the rules of Christian temperance, abhorring falsehood and deceit, and making it our first care and duty to improve in that best of all knowledge, which shall fit us, through His mercy, for the kingdom of heaven; since, if we fail in this, all the learning, the ability, the riches and the honors of the world, even if it were possible to obtain them, would profit us nothing.

Now here is a slight sketch, which might be greatly enlarged, of those points in which all Christians are completely agreed; and therefore, in a judicious and constant reference to them, no teacher would run the

risk of invading the province of the ministry, of giving offence to the spirit of sectarianism, or of provoking the slightest reproach or censure from any right-minded man. I do not mean, however, that even on these, the instructor should be asked to deliver any set or formal lectures. His work will be done much more effectually by a wise and affectionate infusion of those ideas into all his other teaching, thus imperceptibly and gradually leading the thoughts and feelings of his youthful flock into the right channel, especially endeavoring to exhibit religion in its loveliest and most attractive aspect, and always remembering his own accountability to God, for the ultimate results of his most important instrumentality.

For, after all, in the present constitution and habits of our world, what instrumentality is so important as that of the teacher? The influence of home—alas! that it should be so—can no longer be assumed, in these days, according to its scriptural authority, as the primary element of power in training the child in the way he should go. The influence of the church is frittered down to a few hours on the Lord's day, and too often neutralized by the folly and pleasure-loving habits of the community. But the teacher has possession of all the week. Nearly six hours out of every twenty-four, are passed under his immediate superintendence, and with many peculiar advantages, which are calculated to give him, at least, a larger sway over the minds and feelings of his pupils, than can be exercised by almost any other individual, if they are but skilfully and judiciously improved. For to him, the scholars look up with admiration of his

superior knowledge, and with undoubting confidence in his capacity to instruct them in all which they are expected to learn. To him, their peculiar disposition and character are more fully open than to their own family connexions. From his lips, the language of rebuke or encouragement—the words of severity or kindness—are clothed with especial power. And if they become convinced that he regards them with deep and affectionate interest, they are ready, for the most part, to repay it with warm attachment, and to allow him, with cheerful acquiescence, to mould them to his will.

I have said already, that the secular teacher cannot be justly charged with the solemn responsibilities of the parent. The father has no right to consider him his substitute. His contract does not extend so far. His stipulated duty and the money which he receives for his services, refer to no such obligation. And therefore, if he confines himself strictly to the limits of his formal undertaking, and attempts no more than the instruction which certain branches of earthly knowledge require, and imparts that instruction correctly, neither the parents, nor the scholars, nor the world, can have any just reason to complain.

But may I not most truly assert that there is another party to the agreement? God, who has conferred upon the teacher his faculties and talents for this most honorable and important work—that glorious and almighty Being before whom the account of this high stewardship must one day be given in—the great and supreme Teacher of mankind, whose providence has committed the pupils to the instruc-

tor's care, at that early and impressive age, when their hearts are not yet callous, nor their understandings utterly blinded by the deceitfulness of sin—He who is the Creator, the Redeemer and the Judge both of the teachers and the taught, takes a direct interest in the discharge of this most serious and noble calling. To Him the efforts of instructors must be directed—by Him their spirit must be guided,—if they would expect His approbation of their labors, and His favor for their reward. Who should understand the true definition of education, like those whose very vocation it is to teach the youth of a professedly Christian country? Who should feel more deeply the value of the immortal soul, than those who undertake to explain the phenomena of mental philosophy, and to prepare the child for the work of a life, connected in its inevitable results, with an endless destiny? And if, unhappily, it be true, that the other agencies in this all-important task have lost so much of their proper power, and it be still possible for the great body of our teachers to supply the mournful deficiency, Q, should not that fact stimulate their diligence and animate their zeal, that their influence may yield a salutary check to the progress of impiety, and their labors become, by the divine blessing, the bulwark of a failing world!

The cardinal error, then, in our modern systems of education, is the want of the element of religious authority; mainly flowing from the sad neglect of family devotion, and the consequent lack of all family government and discipline. So far as the rising generation are concerned, our schools and teachers afford

the best, if not the only instrumentality to rectify the spreading evil. But whether the great body of our instructors can be aroused to the effort which it demands, is a question, the resolution of which requires far more knowledge than I possess of their prevailing disposition. May not this topic present a useful subject of deliberation for the influential and important body which I have the honor to address? Various and admirable is the range of subjects which others, far better qualified, have set before you, and it may be that my present theme has been much more ably and eloquently enforced among them. But be this as it may, I am thoroughly convinced that the growing apathy towards piety, and the rapid acceleration of disorder and confusion throughout the world, urgently demand among Christian men, a deep and earnest feeling of solicitude, to guard our rising youth from the dangers of contamination, and to train them up in the way they should go, not only as scholars, citizens and patriots,, but as the heirs of immortality and the subjects of God. For even the interests of earth cannot be secured independently of heaven. The mind cannot be truly educated without the soul. The foundations of our republic were laid in the faith of the gospel. And the superstructure of our national greatness itself cannot long remain, if those foundations be suffered to fail. The diffusion of intelligence throughout the masses, by our common schools, the multiplication of academies and colleges, the improvement of the buildings, the books and the apparatus of instruction, the Lyceums, the lectures, the cabinets of natural history—all are good—all are useful. But a

higher spiritual principle must preside over our intellectual advancement, the interests of eternity must be kept in their true connection with the present life, our youth must be taught the importance of their religious duties, and the infinite value of their religious privileges, or all our boasted illumination will fail to guide them, and the glory of our land, like that of ancient Israel, will go down into darkness, corruption and decay.

I am perfectly aware that the strain of such an argument is far from being acceptable to the ordinary mind, in our age and country. We live at a time of unprecedented and morbid activity. The discoveries and changes of the last few years have been so brilliant and surprising, that the general judgment is carried away; and, by a very easy and natural transition, mankind look down upon all old knowledge, with a self-complacent mixture of pity and contempt, because, in some departments, our modern achievements have gone so far beyond it. They stop not to consider that the true dignity, peace and happiness of our race depend upon the elevation of the moral and spiritual life, according to the laws of God, the Supreme Disposer. They pause not to reflect upon the solemn truth, that no possible combination of external circumstances can secure the purity, the virtue and the stability of principle and conduct, on which alone the safety of individuals or of nations must depend. And yet they know full well that the applications of steam, electricity and mechanism, however admirable in their way, have no power to reach our higher nature. They behold with admiration the rail-roads, the ocean-

propellers, the magnetic telegraphs, the mines of gold, and silver, and precious stones, the new territories, the new channels of commercial enterprise, the new weapons for slaughtering mankind, the new anodynes to pain and suffering, the new arts, new instruments, new luxuries. And they know full well that all these, however useful to our bodily interests, touch not the soul, and yield no aid to the cultivation of the virtues —truth, justice, temperance, love, moral courage, relative duty and kindly affection, which form the only firm bonds of human society. But they forget that while the progress of our age may be onward in the first class of characteristics, it may be downward in the second. They forget that although the outward, the physical, and even to a certain extent, the intellectual, may go on for a while, with extraordinary splendor, under the government of Mammon, yet the inward, the spiritual and the moral, can only prosper under the government of God. And they like not to be reminded of the mournful lesson which all history teaches,—that when the government of God is cast aside in the work of education, by the general consent of nations, the government of Mammon, with all its pride of confident pretension, only serves to precipitate their ruin.

But while the majority forget all this, or, rather, pass the subject by without attention, through their headlong devotion to politics, to pleasure and to gain, there are still left, amongst the thoughtful and reflecting, a large number of influential minds, capable of seeing the rapid tendency of our age to moral deterioration, and of understanding that the only element

able to check its growth must be found in the strength of the religious principle. It is this to which the conscience must appeal. On this, under the form of an oath, rest the faithful discharge of official powers, and the public administration of justice. In this abide the purity of domestic life, and the safety of the conjugal relation. The political union of church and state, in the shape of an establishment, is indeed inconsistent with our national government. But the state is none the less dependent on religious principle for its life and preservation, since that alone is the basis on which we rely for law and order. Take religion away—deliver the hearts and souls of men from the anticipation of a final judgment—educate them in a practical irreverence towards the gospel of Christ, and you may adorn their atheism with all the earthly knowledge in the world, while yet, in the end, you do but qualify them for a more skilful indulgence of their appetites and passions—you do but give a freer rein to lust and ambition, to fraud and deceit, to envy and malice, to licentiousness and excess, to robbery and pillage, to violence and blood. The higher the civilization of the world, the worse for the peace of mankind, if the restraining and ennobling influence of religion be absent. And the lawless anarchy which must speedily invade all communities, if the fear of God be lost, would not only sink them into a condition worse than the lowest barbarism of savage life, but would again call down upon the race, in the severity of divine mercy itself, the sentence of irretrievable destruction.

Our only hope, then, whether we look to the tem-

poral or the spiritual future, lies in the religious element of education. For all experience proves that the religious principle rarely takes a true hold of any heart, unless it be implanted early, and therefore the schools, where childhood and youth receive their most abiding impulses for good or evil, are the resource on which we must depend, under God, if our land is to be saved from the withering blight of infidelity. I speak not of our universities and colleges, for this very reason; because it is well known, that, with few exceptions, the moral and spiritual character of those who enter our superior seats of learning, is fixed before they go there; and seldom does it happen that the atmosphere around them works any higher change, than the improvement and development of the intellectual man. In order that they may send forth good results, it is necessary that our preparatory schools should furnish them with good materials; and nothing can be more unjust and absurd than to charge them with blame, merely because they cannot produce grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles.

The great and usually the decisive impressions must therefore be effected, for the mass, in our common schools and our academies. The main body of our teachers must come up to the work of religious instruction, at least so far as a reverence for the word of God, and the influence of Christian motives and principles can extend, without involving controversy. And then we shall have some reliable resource, in the defect of parental authority. Then the school of the week will become, not as it is now, too often, an ob-

stacle, but a firm auxiliary to the school of the Sabbath, and the efforts of the ministry. Happy for our country and for the world will be the day, when such shall be the prevailing aim of our instructors, that the formation of character is understood to be the first object of their care, and the improvement of the soul goes hand in hand with the improvement of the intellect. May the labors of the American Institute of Instruction be crowned with this result, and thus they will be entitled to the name of benefactors to our race, in that highest sense, which unites the best interests of time, to the abiding happiness of eternity.

## LECTURE II.

---

THE

### EDUCATION DEMANDED BY THE PECULIAR CHARACTER OF OUR CIVIL INSTITUTIONS.

---

BY BENJAMIN LABAREE, D. D.,  
PRESIDENT OF MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE, VT.

---

It will be my object in the present lecture, to exhibit some of the characteristics of that education, which the peculiarities of our civil institutions, and our circumstances as a people, seem to demand.

Wise men are not well agreed in their definition of education. One restricts the meaning of the word to the development and discipline of the intellectual faculties; another includes the moral, and a third, the physical powers. To *educe* the primary principles and elements of knowledge in the human soul, is believed by some to be the appropriate province of education. Others maintain that the communication of knowledge to the mind, is an essential department of the work, and others yet, would include among the necessary duties of the educator, the training of the character of his pupils, and preparing them prospectively for the probable stations in life, which they

may be called to fill. We would give the term a meaning so comprehensive as to embrace all these different views. Education we think, should be regarded under two general aspects, viz:—the *subjective*, including the development, the culture and the discipline of the whole man, physical, moral and intellectual—then the *objective*, preparing the subject by the training of his character, and by appropriate instruction for the right discharge of his duties to himself, to his country, to his race and to his God.

Education, then, in its principles and prominent features, admits of little variation. As face answers to face in the glass, so the mind of man to man. Making due allowance for individual peculiarities, which the skilful educator will never disregard—the subject, the method, and the object of education, may be substantially the same, the world over. Physical, intellectual, and moral powers belong to man as man; duties to himself, to his race, and to his God are not very dissimilar in Asia, Africa and America, or in the islands of the ocean. As a subject of civil government, however, man's duties and obligations are variable, and depend in a high degree upon the relation, which, as an individual, he sustains to the State. Accordingly, systems of education have usually been modified by the form of government, and by the political duties of the citizen. In the free States of antiquity, the people were required to merge, in a great measure, their private rights and their individuality, in the public weal. The State was the absorbing idea. At Sparta, and sometimes at Athens, education was under the control of government; youth were

educated by the State, and for the State. Among the Romans, education was more private and free; yet even there, the idea of Rome, the great, the renowned, the invincible republic, occupied and filled the minds both of teachers and pupils, and diffused itself, like leaven, through every department of intellectual training. It is obvious that the department of education which has relation to the duties of the citizen must ever be modified by the peculiar character of civil institutions.

As our Government differs in many important respects from that of other nations, it will follow that our methods of training youth for their duties and responsibilities must be adapted to our peculiar circumstances. Where is the nation in which the education of the young is so intimately connected with the prosperity, the happiness and the liberty of the whole people? Where is the nation in which it is so essential for the people to keep ever in view their responsibility as individuals? There are nations not a few, in which the people have no choice in the selection of their rulers, and no prospect whatever of becoming rulers themselves; the only part which they perform in the machinery of government, is that of passive, obedient subjects. A proud, imperious aristocracy, holds the chief places of power and influence, and indignantly spurns the approach of every aspiring plebeian, who attempts to rise above his social condition. Not so with us. The avenues to the highest places of authority and distinction are free from all artificial impediments, are open to competitors of every name and of every condition. A field most

ample and most inviting is presented for the exhibition and employment of every variety of talent, and of every degree of mental culture. Thus an appeal, silent but effectual, is made to the youth of our country, and awakens to life and action their intellectual and moral energies. The plough-boy at his daily task hears the appeal and feels the inspiration; he searches until he discovers the path plainly marked, through which he can ascend to a position among magistrates and statesmen. The young lawyer, unknown beyond the limits of his native village, or the commander of a platoon of militia, may, in a few years, be elevated to a station more honorable and dignified than that of marshals and emperors. How responsible, then, is the office of the instructor, who has the moulding and direction of youthful character! who knows not but the pupil he is endeavoring to educate may be called to guide the helm of state, and thus effect for good or for evil, the condition of the world! But, should such prospect seem too distant and uncertain to have any practical bearing upon the instructor's action, another consideration, nearly allied to this, invests his office with solemnity and weighty responsibility. If the youth he is training do not occupy the high places of influence in the nation, they will soon have a voice in determining who shall sit in the chair of authority. We have high warrant for the truth of the maxim, "Like people, like priest;" and the maxim, slightly modified, will apply with equal propriety in a democratic government, to people and rulers. The character of the electors, will determine usually the character of the magistrate. In

what way can we so effectually secure the services of intelligent, upright and incorruptible magistrates and statesmen, as by implanting right principles in the minds of our children, and giving an early, virtuous direction to their modes of thought and habits of life ?

What, then, are the needful elements in that education, which will prepare our youth to guard successfully our civil and religious institutions against the dangers which surround them, and to transmit them to posterity, not only unimpaired, but improved and perfected ? Without attempting to exhaust the subject, I shall mention and discuss four distinct characteristics, which such education ought to possess.

1. Our youth must be taught to entertain *large and liberal views.*

We have a country of vast extent, presenting almost every variety of climate, and developing every shade of human character. Conflict of opinion and collision of local interests are inevitable. The hardy laborer upon our rock-bound hills, can with difficulty sympathize with the indolent and effeminate dwellers on the Rio Grande. The people, whose staple products are dug from the mountains or drawn from the frozen surface of our lakes and rivers, would seem to have but little interest in common with the lordly proprietors of hereditary plantations. So diverse are the industrial pursuits of the people of different sections, that the wisest and most impartial legislators would be unable to frame laws that would meet the wants and expectations of all the people. To reconcile the conflicting interests of commerce and agricul-

ture, and to harmonize with them the claims of the manufacturer, is a problem which statesmen find great difficulty in solving. It cannot be denied that prejudices, deep and strong, do exist between the inhabitants of different sections, growing out of antagonist pursuits, and difference in modes of life; and that these unfortunate prejudices have, in too many instances, interrupted the interchange of kind feelings and mutual confidence. Men of narrow and illiberal views have not been wanting to nourish and strengthen these local antipathies. The sentiments, the manners and customs of society, have been so exaggerated and distorted on the one side and on the other, as to call into exercise feelings of reciprocal hostility. The more amiable traits of character, the more generous and noble qualities of the heart, are thrown into the back-ground, and all that is unlovely and repulsive occupies the most prominent place upon the canvass.

Such sectional feuds and antipathies are most seriously to be deprecated; they relax the bonds which are designed to unite us in one common brotherhood, and they are wholly incompatible with that unity and harmony, which ever ought to prevail among the members of this great political family.

In the same community, too, men will differ in their social habits, in their political opinions, in their religious views, and on a variety of other subjects, and they will claim the right freely to express their opinions. Is not this the most conclusive evidence of their freedom? Tyrants may compel men to adopt the same habits, to pursue the same course of life, and to express the same thoughts, but where men

are truly free, they will differ in opinions and in actions ; our rulers and our people should not be men of one idea. The particular community in which they reside ought not so to fill their vision, that they cannot survey the whole country, and fairly estimate the claims of other sections besides their own. The sentiments they entertain should not be so nearly allied to bigotry as to exclude from the pale of their sympathies and confidence those who may have embraced opposite opinions. Because a politician advocates a national bank, it does not follow that he has lost his reason or his conscience ; and if another is honestly opposed to a protective tariff, it is not quite certain that he is an enemy to his country. My neighbor has as perfect a right to his opinions, as I have to mine ; he may be as honest, as well-intentioned in the adoption and defence of his views, as I am in the belief and support of mine. I will convince him of his error, if I can, by fair and honorable argument, or if the promulgation of his sentiments are injurious to the best interests of society, I may invoke the aid of the law, but it will not be admitted into the creed of any true and enlightened republican, that a man may persecute his neighbor for opinion's sake. This is a lesson which ought to be indelibly engraven upon the heart of every child. Such liberality of feeling is by no means inconsistent with a fair and earnest maintenance of our individual sentiments, rights, and local interests. It is only the practical expression of that elevated principle contained in the golden rule of reciprocity.

The foreign element, which is becoming so promi-

nent in our social and civil state, demands the same forbearance and expansiveness of view, on the part of our public men and of the rising generation. The multitude of emigrants from the old world, interfused among our population, is rapidly changing the identity of American character. These strangers come among us, ignorant of our institutions, and unacquainted with the modes of thought and habits of life peculiar to a free people. Accustomed to be restrained by the strong arm of power, and to look upon themselves as belonging to an inferior class of the human race, they suddenly emerge from the darkness of oppression into the light and liberty of freemen. The transition is instantaneous, and admits of no preparation for the new life. Will not this sudden change in their political relations produce a corresponding change in their views respecting personal rights and duties? Would it be strange if in such circumstances, many should mistake lawless freedom from restraint, for true and rational liberty? Shall these adopted citizens become a part of the body politic, and firm supporters of liberal institutions, or will they prove to our republic what the Goths and Huns were to the Roman Empire? The answer to this question depends in a great degree upon the wisdom and fidelity of our teachers and associated influences. They have a two-fold duty to perform in regard to this class of our population. On the one hand they must act the part of master-builders, and by degrees mould these unprepared and uncongenial elements into the form and character which the peculiar nature of the edifice demands, and in due time

the youth especially may become intelligent, enterprising and liberal-minded supporters of free institutions. On the other hand, our instructors must prepare our native population for the suitable reception and treatment of these strangers, must teach them to lay aside prejudices and animosities, to meet the newcomers in the spirit of kindness and benevolence, and to enlist their sympathies and good-will on the side of liberty, humanity and truth. If our country is to remain, as it has been, the asylum of the oppressed, and the home of the free, a wise and liberal policy must be pursued towards foreigners; resolute and persevering exertions must be made to engraft them upon the republican stock, and to qualify them for the duties of free and enlightened citizens.

Leaving for a moment all domestic and limited considerations, let us look upon our country in its relation to the world and to the future. We behold a vast empire suddenly called into existence, and like the fabled Hercules, making its power felt even in infancy. Already has it acquired a name and a place among the more powerful nations of the earth. Already have its principles, its successful career, and its example, modified the views of kings and statesmen on the subject of government and of human rights. What has convulsed the nations of Europe, shaken thrones to their centre, torn crowns from the head of royalty, and driven kings into exile? May not these astounding results be attributed, in part at least, to the influence of the great political truth, so happily illustrated and enforced in the practical work-

ing of our social system thus far, that *man is capable of self-government?*

What is to be the destiny of this colossal republic? Note its humble beginnings, then trace its rapid progress. First a little band of houseless exiles on a sterile beach, in a wintry storm; soon a group of small republics; then a tide of emigration rolls from the Atlantic up the steep sides to the lofty peaks of the Alleghanies, and projects itself into the immense valley beyond. That vast country, large enough for kingdoms and empires, is peopled, as if smitten by the wand of a magician. The tide rolls onward to the base of the Rocky Mountains, overleaps that mighty barrier, and is now spreading itself along the shores of the Pacific. When that immense territory, bounded by the great oceans, the lakes and the gulf, shall have been peopled by industrious and intelligent freemen, rejoicing under the protection of equitable laws and a wise administration, when the number of our population shall amount to one hundred millions, as it may, during the life-time of children now living, —where, in the history of the world, ancient or modern, can be found a nation of equal grandeur, and of equal moral power. The influence of such a nation will be felt in every tribe and kingdom on the globe. It will affect, for good or ill, myriads of human beings, down to the time of the world's final catastrophe.

If such, then, are the peculiarities of our institutions, such our circumstances as a people, and such the destiny that seems to await us, where, on this vast theatre of life, where shall we find an appropri-

ate place for men of illiberal and contracted views! They may perhaps acquire renown as bar-room orators and political demagogues among men whose minds are as low and as vacant as their own, but they are not the men who are qualified for stations of influence and responsibility in the present condition of our country.

Let our instructors then aim to divest their pupils of all unworthy sectional prejudices, and violent party antipathies, let them inspire our youth with a comprehensive patriotism, and a genuine, expansive benevolence towards their countrymen of all sects, parties and nations, who are truly the friends of liberty and virtue, and they will have the distinguished honor of training for the service of their country a class of men which the exigencies of the times demand.

2. Our circumstances as a people demand that the *discriminating powers of our youth* be carefully cultivated, that they may discern between *the true and the false, the good and the bad.*

We live in an age of conflicting opinions. In our country especially, freedom of thought is claimed to be the birth-right of the people, and hence ideas, systems of belief, and practices long established, are examined, discussed and opposed with zeal and earnestness. A violent struggle is in progress between the *old* and the *new*. One maintains that there is no wisdom in the past, that all was wrong in morals, politics, philosophy and religion, until the vision of man was blessed with the light of the present century; another runs to the opposite extreme, and affirms that

the boasted improvements of the present day furnish no evidence of superior wisdom; that our steam-engines, and power-presses, and facilities for travel and telegraphic communications, are a poor compensation for that love of order, that reverence for the wisdom and experience of the past, which so happily characterized a former age. The modern innovator, believing that every change is improvement, presses zealously forward in his wild career, and, like the self-confident Phaeton, who ambitiously sought to guide the steeds of Phœbus, he may be traced by the disorder and confusion which mark his path. The lover of the past on the other hand, is an enemy to all progress; he looks back to the "dark ages" with a sigh, for he regards that period as the culminating point in human improvement—the most luminous era in the history of mankind. Such ultra opinions are probably embraced by few, but between these extremes there is ample space for manifold theories and systems. Our country at the present time is exceedingly prolific in systems of belief, practical and speculative; some of which are only the revived opinions of a former age, others are the genuine offspring of American genius. In theology, we have a rich variety of speculations on all the great questions which affect man's relation to his Maker, and the mode of religious worship. Naturalism and Super-naturalism, Formalism and Spiritualism, Pantheism and Perfectionism, Millerism and Mormonism, are a few of the new sects and parties which profess to be aiming at a correct view, and an accurate expression of religious truth. In the philosophy of mind, it would be no

easy task to enumerate existing systems, and human ingenuity has not yet exhausted the subject; the next arrival from Germany may acquaint us with some new theory, or the modification of an old one. In the healing art, professional men are not less discordant in their opinions. Do not the terms Solidists and Humoralists, Phlebotomists and Anti-phlebotomists, Botanics, Allopathists, Homeopaths and Hydropathists furnish sufficient proof of conflicting opinions and practices in the science of medicine? How numerous are the epithets that are designed to express the different phases of political parties, and widely opposite views of government! It must be admitted that there is among us a remarkable proclivity towards ideas and theories which are new and strange, for those referred to constitute but a small portion of the questions and notions, which are even now agitating the public mind and forcing themselves upon the attention of reflecting men. From this inclination to hear and to believe new things, we may not infer that the human mind prefers error to truth. False opinions gain currency for the most part, because they are intimately associated with truth. Modern system-makers well understand this principle; they accordingly seize upon some idea, admitted by all to be important, and weave it adroitly into their system, parade it prominently before the public eye, and thus arrest attention, remove prejudices and secure followers. The real nature and tendencies of the system are kept out of view, and the multitude is deceived by the brilliant fragment of truth. How much like those false-lights which depraved men

erect upon the shores of the ocean to lure to ruin the tempest-tossed mariner! Bewildered in the darkness of night, he discovers, or thinks he discovers the well-known and long-sought signal, and rejoices to be relieved from doubt and anxiety, but soon his bark dashes upon the rocks and all is lost. Now it was not pure falsehood that destroyed this mariner. That light was a real light, but in a false position. So truth, out of its appropriate connections, and relations may become more dangerous and destructive than open, undisguised falsehood. How, then, shall our youth be guarded against the allurements of plausible but erroneous opinions? Their powers of discrimination must early be cultivated; they must be informed of their danger, and taught to separate the wheat from the chaff, truth from falsehood. Our instructors must endeavor to train up a generation of men, who will not be so servilely attached to antiquity, that they will close their eyes to substantial improvement, nor so zealous for change that they can discover nothing good in the past or the present order of things; men who will patiently examine, and candidly sift the confused mass of truth and error, fact and theory, presented for consideration. Such men are needed in the learned professions, and in all the influential stations of public life. We need physicians who will not assume that the art of restoring and preserving health has already attained the acme of perfection, and yet who will manfully oppose the nostrums and the ignorant presumption of empirics. We must have jurists, who will not look with contempt upon every suggested improvement, because

it has not the sanction of Blackstone and Lord Coke ; and theologians, who will not believe that Calvin and Hooker, Wesley and Edwards, have left no fruit ungathered from the wide field of sacred science. Legislators and statesmen we must have, who are not so in love with law-making and constitution-mending, that they will allow nothing to be tested by fair and full experiment ; and instructors, too, who will not regard as the chief qualifications of their office, ability to decry the practice and opinions of their predecessors, and a self-complacent wisdom which looks upon every innovation as an improvement, but who will hold fast that which is good, and engraft upon it the results of a mature and well tested experience.

In all these professions, men of candor and discrimination will perform the part of a skilful chemist. By applying the appropriate tests to these various compounds of truth and error, they will precipitate the error and exhibit truth in all its limpid purity. But error is oftentimes like counterfeit coin, so nearly like the genuine, as to deceive the most practised eye. We cannot always trust, then, to our own skill and wisdom implicitly ; in times of doubt and perplexity, we must, with humble docility, seek that wisdom which comes from above, and which will be liberally bestowed upon all who diligently search for it. How beautiful, how morally sublime was the petition of the youthful Solomon, when advanced to the throne of his father. He was burdened with the responsibilities of government, and was called upon to determine difficult and intricate questions. Distrusting

his own wisdom, he raised his heart to the God of his fathers, and humbly prayed, "Give thy servant an understanding heart, that he may discern between the good and the bad."

3. The third characteristic demanding our attention, is, *True intellectual and moral independence.*

There is a false as well as a true independence, and we fear that the former at the present day is often mistaken for the latter. Our institutions naturally and very properly foster a spirit of independence among the people. Demagogues, for selfish purposes, seize upon this idea and flatter the multitude by calling them the sovereigns of the land, and teaching them that they are above law because they are the source of power; that they have no superiors, and therefore age, and wisdom, and station have no particular claims to respect. "Does not the great charter of our liberties say, that all men are born free and equal, and are we not taught by this, that every man is *free* to do what seems to him best, restrained only by positive law, and that he is *equal* to every other man in character and standing, in rights and privileges?" Is it not surprising that parents should adopt this liberal interpretation of freedom, and should rear their children upon such a principle? Time was, when obedience was considered the first lesson for the child to learn, and a necessary qualification for good citizenship; now the doctrine prevails with some, that the child's spirit must not be broken by correction, his natural and inherent rights must not be invaded by enforcing upon him parental authority. Time was, and some of us can remember it, when it

was not deemed incompatible with the spirit and manners of republicans for the pupils in our common schools to make respectful obeisance to ladies and gentlemen whom they chanced to meet; sed tempora mutantur. In these days of light and progress, let the unfortunate traveller enter some of our villages, a little past four o'clock, on a winter afternoon, and he will probably receive such unequivocal proofs of youthful republican independence, as will make a permanent impression. Such insubordination and incivility, under the specious name of independence, must bring reproach and contempt upon our institutions. The same spirit manifests itself in ways manifold among us; it is not confined to the school-boy nor to the youth, to the native nor to the emigrant; and if unchecked, let no one be surprised to learn that intelligent foreigners begin to regard *republican* and *barbarian* as interchangeable terms.

True independence of character, such as our times demand, embraces several distinct particulars; it relates to manners, opinions and actions. It will not pay obsequious reverence to the caprices of fashion, nor to the artificial, heartless forms of social life which men of vacant heads have invented for their pastime, yet it will regard with scrupulous care those proprieties and courtesies of life, which are founded upon good sense and true benevolence.

In the formation of his opinions, the man of independence determines to employ all appropriate and available means for the discovery of truth, and to estimate the opinions of others according to their real worth. He listens not to prejudice on the one hand,

nor to authority on the other; is alike opposed to that low servility which marks the conduct of the cringing sycophant, and presumes not to entertain an opinion until permission is obtained from its master; and to that pride and self-confidence, which, from a fancied superiority, looks down contemptuously upon the sentiments of others. He seeks instruction from every source, but embraces nothing as truth, except on conviction. All questions within the scope of his investigations, and resolvable by patient research, he determines for himself, and when his mind has reached the limits prescribed to human thought and inquiry, he humbly submits to a Divine teacher, and cheerfully allows an intelligent faith to take the place of sense and reason. The truly independent mind, like the planets revolving in their orbits, is controlled and regulated by two great forces. On the one hand it is attracted to a centre by fixed and eternal truths; on the other, it is drawn from that centre by its inherent love of inquiry and research. When these two forces are wisely balanced and well-adjusted, the mind revolves in its appropriate orbit, and is exhibited in all its native strength and its necessary dependence. Such a mind will never exalt one truth at the expense of another; it will not invest one idea with a factitious importance, and regard that as paramount to all others; it will endeavor to weigh all in the balance of even-handed justice, and to determine the value of each with candor and impartiality. Such is true independence in the formation of opinions; it is manifested also in action.

When truth and duty are well ascertained, their

mandates will be scrupulously obeyed. Passion may raise her truculent voice and endeavor to excite a mutiny, but the authoritative command of reason quells the rising rebellion, and restores order and harmony. Fear may exclaim, There is a lion in the way, I must turn aside. Principle replies, Sooner will I be cast into a den of lions, than deviate from the path of rectitude. Interest may display her golden treasure and tempting bribes, and say, All these things will I give thee; Moral firmness responds, More precious to me is the approbation of my own conscience than all the gold of Ophir. Ambition offers power and place, favor and distinction, to draw the man of independence from his purpose; he indignantly spurns the alluring offer, and firmly replies. Far preferable is the humble condition of Cincinnatus, cultivating his three acres of land, to that of the prince-like Wolsey in all the pride of his power and greatness, yet accompanied with the humiliating consciousness of his own degradation.

Popular sentiment marshals her forces, and endeavors to drive the man of moral independence from his lofty position; she frowns and threatens, smiles and flatters; he hears the angry surges dashing around him, is fully conscious of his danger, and yet remains firm as the wave-beaten rock. Our peculiar condition as a people demands a host of such men, yet we fear the number among us is small. How many of our young men take counsel of their passions, their prejudices, their interest or their ease, rather than follow the plain dictates of truth and virtue! How many, even, who profess to love the

right, will sometimes see principle trampled in the dust and lie bleeding at every pore, and yet offer no hand of relief, no arm of defence, no voice of expostulation and reproof against the wrong-doer! How many, even in official stations, are more solicitous to know how they can please the people and conciliate their favor, than how they can instruct and improve them.

We need men in all public and private stations, of influence and responsibility, who will calmly determine what is right, and then with resolute firmness adhere to it. Men of such character in the sacred office will not hesitate to preach against war, oppression, intemperance, or any other moral evil, through fear of offending this or that individual or party. In the exercise of the rights of private judgment, and under the guidance of an enlightened conscience, they will declare the truth boldly and earnestly. Legislators, of such character, would not consent to be instruments of wrong-doing to promote the interests of party, and magistrates would sooner sacrifice official station and popular favor than yield to the lawless dictates of an excited multitude, or swerve from the acknowledged principles of truth. We want men as prompt, as firm, as valiant in defence of the right, as is the brave soldier on the field of battle. He manfully meets the enemy face to face, brings to the conflict all his energies, and when he retreats, if retreat he must, before superior skill or force, he carries with him the respect and the admiration of both friends and foes. Who has not admired the personal courage, the independent spirit, and the resolute firmness of Napoleon's

distinguished Marshal, who commanded the rear-guard of the grand army on its memorable retreat from Russia? Having exhibited prodigies of valor, and endured hardships almost unparalleled in the annals of war, he reached at length the river Niemen, which forms the boundary of the Russian territory. Here his soldiers all deserted, but by extraordinary exertions he succeeded in rallying thirty men, with whom, for a time, he kept the enemy at bay; and when this small party abandoned the cause as desperate, he fought the enemy single-handed. Slowly retreating through the streets of Wilna, with his face to the foe, he crossed the bridge over the Niemen, and was the last of the army that left the Russian territory. Proceeding to the first town where food and rest could be obtained, he fell in with an officer of rank, an old companion in arms, by whom he was not at first recognized. "Who are you?" said the General. Mark his reply. "I am the rear-guard of the Grand Army of France, Marshal Ney. I have fired the last musket-shot on the bridge of Kowno—I have thrown into the Niemen the last of our arms—and I have walked hither alone, as you see me, across the forests." What more could he have done? And what a model is here presented for all who are engaged in the great moral conflict! Let our posts of influence, high and low, be filled by men of such unyielding purpose, such determined perseverance in resisting the enemies of virtue and truth, and let our children be early taught to contend thus earnestly against vice without regard to personal consequences, and who could despair of the republic?

4. *A deeply settled conviction of the paramount importance of religious principle*, is another element in the education demanded by our peculiar circumstances.

Foreigners, accustomed to regard religion as a mere appendage of the State, have often said reproachfully, that we have no religion in America. Some of our own citizens profess to believe that religion is an affair of private and social life, and therefore it can find no place in public, political institutions. If religion consist mainly in outward forms prescribed by laws and constitutions, if it be a part of the governing power, designed to aid the civil authorities in regulating the affairs of State, we have no religion ; and many, perhaps, would not regard the absence of such a power either as a cause of reproach or a source of regret. But we have a religion in America, and its conservative influence is felt from the heart of the nation to its most remote extremities. It constitutes the woof of society ; its fibres are intertwined and interlaced with the whole texture of our social and political fabric, and should they be sundered by the rash hands of empirical reformers, the whole mass would speedily crumble to ruin.

A distinguished Frenchman, who has studied our institutions more candidly and more philosophically than any other foreigner, has expressed his views on this subject in the following language. "Upon my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first that struck my attention ; and the longer I staid there the more did I perceive the great political consequences resulting from this

state of things. Religion exercises but little influence upon the laws and upon the details of public opinion, but it directs the manners of the community, and by regulating domestic life, it regulates the State. There is no country in the whole world, in which the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men, than in America."

The indispensable necessity of Christianity as a conservative power, in view of our peculiar character as a people, is forcibly presented in the following language:—"Nature and circumstances concurred to make the inhabitants of the United States bold men, as is sufficiently attested by the enterprising spirit with which they seek for fortune. If the minds of the Americans were free from all trammels, they would very shortly become the most daring innovators and the most implacable disputants in the world. But the revolutionists of America are obliged to profess an ostensible respect for Christian morality and equity, which restrains them from accomplishing their designs. Thus, while the law in America permits the people to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit what is rash or unjust. How is it possible," he earnestly inquires, "how is it possible that society should escape destruction, if the moral tie be not strengthened in proportion as the political tie is relaxed? and what can be done with a people who are their own masters, if they are not submissive to the laws of the Deity?"

Are not these views in the main correct? Are we not becoming, as a people, more and more bold, rest-

less and impatient of restraint? Shall we not find abundant proof in the family, in the school and in society at large, that there is an increasing disrespect for law and for authority? What, then, must be the unavoidable result, if religious restraint fails to exert its power over the minds and hearts of our people? The experiment has been tried in a distant nation within the recollection of some who hear me. The political tie was relaxed, the moral tie was not strengthened, and oceans of blood flowed, and hecatombs of human beings were sacrificed on the altar of political frenzy and atheistical fanaticism. Does any one desire to see that experiment again tried? Hitherto we have not had much to fear; religion has exerted a strong and a most salutary influence in almost every department of social and political life, but ill-boding signs begin to appear in our moral horizon. Who so blind that he cannot see how reluctantly some of our citizens, even some of our officials, submit to religious restraint? They desire to be bound by no obligation, political or religious; they would be left entirely to the guidance of natural impulse; they would riot uncontrolled in the largest liberty. They maintain that children must be allowed to follow their inclinations. On the subject of religion especially, the young mind must receive no instruction, no biases, that when it becomes mature, and capable of forming its own opinions, it may judge impartially and independently;—a very ingenious recipe for making sceptics.

How would such principles have shocked the pious founders of our institutions! Their first acts, after

landing upon these shores, were acts of religious worship ; they acknowledged God in all their ways ; they inscribed his hallowed name on all their transactions, social, ecclesiastical and secular. In this spirit they laid the foundations of an empire ; they dug deep, they rested not until they had made the rock of eternal truth the basis of their social and political edifice. To their wisdom and conscientious fidelity, are we indebted for our civil and religious liberty, and for that national prosperity which has so signally marked every step of our progress. The same principle on which the pillars of our nation were so securely planted, must continue to sustain them, or they will inevitably fall. The fear of God, accompanied with the belief that we are accountable to Him for all our actions, must be deeply engraven upon the hearts of the people, or the great experiment, whether man is capable of self-government, now in progress, may yet prove a melancholy and a stupendous failure.

I know that some worthy men profess to believe that the education of the intellect and the general diffusion of knowledge will be a sovereign remedy for all our moral and political maladies. How the student of history can adopt such a sentiment, is to me perfectly inexplicable. That mere secular knowledge is not sufficient to countervail the violent passions and impulses of the human heart, is a truth that stands forth in bold relief on the pages of recorded history. Athens gives us lessons on this subject which should not be lightly regarded. Under Solon, she adopted a system of physical and intellectual training, unsurpassed in that day for its wisdom and

comprehensiveness, embracing a range of instruction from the primary schools to the highest department of study with which that age was familiar. If, then, general intelligence, learning and science are the sure safeguards to virtue and public order, the Athenians will furnish an illustration. Shall I lift the curtain and exhibit to you the moral degradation of that refined and educated people? I forbear. Let the believer in the moral restraints of knowledge seek elsewhere for proofs of his theory. Will he search the history of Rome? It will teach him the same lesson as did that of Athens. The period when learning and science attained their highest elevation, was the period most remarkable for the deep depravity and corruption of the Roman people. Seneca, who lived in the Augustan age of Roman literature, has given us a brief summary of the moral condition of the Romans. He says, "All is full of immorality and vice. A monstrous contest of abandoned wickedness is carried on. The love of sin increases daily, and shame is daily more and more extinguished. Vice no longer hides itself. It stalks before all eyes. So public has abandoned wickedness become, and so openly does it flame up in the minds of all, that innocence is no longer merely rare, but has wholly ceased to exist." A still more graphic description of Roman morals is found in Paul's epistle to the church in Rome. The truth is, both Greeks and Romans in the early period of their history were under the restraints of religion, and though uneducated, they were comparatively moral; at a later period, their educated men, their statesmen and philosophers, cast contempt upon the established

worship, and prepared the people to burst the bonds of religious restraint, and at once, iniquity in all its forms, came in like a flood ; then learning, and science, and philosophy, instead of presenting an effectual barrier, gave a fresh and fatal impulse to the rushing tide. Such is the testimony from those renowned republics.

Let us cast a glance at those small, free states, which, in a subsequent age, sprung up on the old Roman territory. Guizot says, "In looking at the history of the Italian republics, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, we are struck with two facts, seemingly contradictory yet still indisputable. We see passing before us a wonderful display of courage, of activity and of genius ; an amazing prosperity is the result ; we see a movement and a liberty unknown to the rest of Europe. But if we ask, what was the real state of the inhabitants ? how they passed their lives ? what was their real share of happiness, the scene changes ; there is perhaps no history so sad, so gloomy ; no period perhaps during which the lot of man appears to have been so agitated, subject to so many deplorable chances, and which so abounds in dissensions and crimes." What the human mind may do, when highly disciplined and stimulated to vigorous action, yet uncontrolled by moral principle, was painfully illustrated in France at the close of the eighteenth century. The author before quoted says, in reference to this period, "I should really be at a loss to say what external facts were respected by the human mind, or exercised any influence over it ; it entertained nothing but hatred or

contempt for the whole social system; it considered itself called upon to reform all things; it looked upon itself as a kind of creator; institutions, opinions, manners, society, even man himself, all seemed to require to be remodelled, and human reason undertook the task. When had the human mind ever before displayed such daring boldness?"

What is the testimony of more recent times? In a late *Essay on the Moral Statistics of France*, it is stated "that crimes against property and person are most numerous in proportion to the population in those parts of the kingdom in which the people are best educated." "This must be owing," says a distinguished writer, "in part to the increased power which education gives of doing either good or evil, and in part to defects in the education afforded; the children are not taught any system of morals based on the nature of man and his social relations, but are left each to grope his way to happiness according to the dictates of his individual mind."

Let us listen to a voice from Scotland. "It is not scholarship alone," says Dr. Chalmers, "but scholarship impregnated with religion, that tells on the great mass of society. We have no faith in the efficacy of mechanic institutes, or even primary and elementary schools, for building up a virtuous and well-conditioned peasantry, so long as they stand dissevered from the lessons of Christian piety. There is a charm ascribed to the scholastic system of Scotland, and the sanguine imagination is, that by importing its machinery into England and Ireland, it will work the same marvellous transformations there on the charac-

ter of their people, that was experienced among ourselves. But it is forgotten, that a warm and earnest Christianity was the animating spirit of all our institutions for generations after they were formed, and that, wanting this, they can no more perform the function of moralizing the people, than skeletons can perform the functions and put forth the faculties of living men. The scholarship of mere letters might, to a certain extent, have diffused *intelligence* among the people, but it is mainly to the religious ingredient that the moral greatness of our peasantry is owing."

From such truths, spread over the whole surface of history, shall we derive no lessons of wisdom? Let our systems of popular education be made as perfect as ingenuity and experience can devise, in the absence of moral and religious culture; let our seminaries of learning be ever so distinguished and successful in training the minds of our youth, and what have we gained? We shall doubtless have strong minds, well disciplined, thoroughly furnished, but what security have we that those minds, that knowledge, will not be directed, with fearful energy, against the dearest rights and the most precious interests of man? The great power of a locomotive upon a railway, may be applied to the most important and useful purposes; but unless that power is under the direction of skill and experience, what destruction of life and property will ensue?

That mere intellectual light is not sufficient to restrain men from vice, may be clearly exhibited in the history of individuals. Are they virtuous in proportion to their knowledge? Take some of the most

renowned luminaries of Athens—Pericles, Alcibiades, Themistocles—and compare them, in point of morals, with an equal number of Indian chiefs in our Western wilderness; and the red men would be put to the blush by the debasing vices and voluptuousness of the refined and enlightened Greeks. Or, select one hundred prominent educated men from the Romans, including the Cæsars, the Clodiases, the Anthonys, and the Catilines, and compare their morality with that of as many ignorant slaves in our Southern states, and the comparison would be favorable to the slaves.

I have dwelt upon this point with some earnestness, because I am thoroughly convinced of its great importance. Among all the crude and visionary notions, speculative and practical, advanced on the subject of education at the present day, there is not one, in my view, more erroneous or more harmful in its tendencies, than that which I have felt constrained to oppose. It is like an attempt to support an immense edifice upon a single pillar, or to navigate a ship through dangerous breakers without a helm. In knowledge and mental discipline there is great power, and whoever develops this power in the individual mind, is bound by every consideration, private and public, secular and sacred, to furnish a guide to watch over and direct its action. I repeat then, solemnly and emphatically, that the most important interests of individuals and of society, the stability and the permanency of our institutions, *imperiously demand* that our children and youth be thoroughly instructed in the principles of moral and religious obligation. I speak in no spirit of sectarianism. I do not ask that

my neighbor shall be compelled to subscribe to my creed, or that the religious sentiments of his children shall be subject to my control. I would make as large and liberal concessions on this subject as reasonable men can desire ; and yet I would insist, earnestly and immovably, that religion should have its appropriate place in our systems of public instruction.

The teacher's office is one of honor and dignity, involving at the same time great responsibilities. The subject on which he expends his efforts is nothing less than the imperishable mind, and every impression he makes thereon may be lasting as eternity. To unfold its powers, to develop and nurture its susceptibilities, to give strength, proportion and harmony to its various and sometimes distorted faculties, and to fit it for the rational enjoyments of life and for its social and civil duties, demands industry, care and wisdom ; it is a work second only in dignity and importance to that of him who aims to prepare the soul for its eternal rest above. As American teachers, we have peculiar duties to perform, and our responsibilities seem to be increased by the direct bearing which our labors have upon the public welfare. It is from no desire to magnify the office, nor is it mere professional vanity which leads me to say, that the happiness, the character and the destinies of this great people depend very much upon the ability, fidelity, and success of the instructors in our schools, academies and colleges. Let them be true to their high trusts, and endeavor to train up a class of citizens of comprehensive views ; men who will look upon the whole country in all its political and moral interests ;

who will regard the Republic as a multiplicity in unity, having local interests apparently incompatible, yet capable of reconciliation by fair and honorable compromise; who will be manly and generous in all their movements, scorning to overreach or outmanœuvre our opponent by resorting to the arts of the practised gambler; who can look to the past, and take lessons of wisdom from history; who will penetrate the future with an intelligent sagacity, and perceive the probable effects of our institutions upon ages yet to come; who can contemplate the changes and professed improvements of the age with a clear and philosophic eye, accurately discriminating between the good and the bad, wisely encouraging the one and as firmly resisting the other; who will stedfastly determine to do what is right, in spite of the favors or the frowns of friends or foes, sect or party, and who will respect and sustain the great principles of Christianity as the foundation, the sheet-anchor of our liberties. Let our instructors prepare and present to their country in successive generations men of such character, qualifications and principles, and with what joyful confidence could we inscribe upon the foundation and the pillars, the walls and entablature, the door-posts and the lintels of this great Republic, "ESTO PERPETUA."

## LECTURE III.

---

### EARNESTNESS.

---

BY ROGER S. HOWARD,  
OF THETFORD, VT.

---

A FINE English poet has said,

“ LIFE is not measured by the *time* we live.”

In this line the word, LIFE, is full of meaning. It means something more than a sleepy, dreamy state of existence. It means something more than a mere lazy round of getting up and lying down,—something more than

“ To eat, and drink, and sleep, and then  
To eat, and drink, and sleep again.”

It means *action*, earnest, well-directed *action*. It means work done, influence exerted, good accomplished.

The amount of work done, or good accomplished by an individual, is not measured by the number of days, or months, or years he may have lived. Some men accomplish much in a short time. They are burning and shining lights. There is a point and

power in all that they think, and say, and do. They may not have lived many years. They may have passed away quickly from the earth. But they have *finished* their work. They have left their

“Foot-prints on the sands of time.”

“Their *bodies* sleep in peace, but their *names* live evermore.” They have lived *long*, because they have lived to some good purpose. They have lived *long*, because they have accomplished the true ends of life, by living wisely and well. And

“That life is *long*, which answers life's great end.”

It will be my chief design, on this occasion, to present to your consideration as distinctly as I may be able, a single trait of character or quality of mind, which has always marked the class of individuals above alluded to:—to show you what I conceive to be *one* of the essential elements of success in every great undertaking, and of course what is essential in the great educational enterprise, which calls us together to-day.

The idea which I wish mainly to illustrate and enforce, is expressed by a single word. But it is a *burning word*, and it contains a *burning thought*. That word is **EARNESTNESS**. And it contains, if I mistake not, the true secret of nearly all the wonderful successes which have astonished the world. It solves the problem of nearly all the heroes, whose achievements are recorded on the pages of history and whose names will live forever in the remembrance of mankind. In all past time, how few individuals do we find—how very few—who have risen to any consi-

derable distinction, and gained an enduring reputation and become truly great, and have left their mark upon the age in which they lived, who were not *earnest men*. One of the most prolific of living writers, whose books astonish us by the vast research and varied learning which they display, was once asked, *how*, in the midst of the duties of a laborious profession, he had been able to accomplish so much? He replied, "*by being a whole man to one thing at a time*,"—in other words, *by being an earnest man*.

The celebrated Charles James Fox once said, (I quote from memory, and may therefore not use his precise language,) that "no man ever went successfully through with any great enterprise, whose earnestness did not amount almost to enthusiasm." There are so many obstacles in the way of any great achievement, that none but the earnest and enthusiastic will persevere and hold on to its accomplishment. The irresolute, the timid, the phlegmatic, after a few faint efforts, will give up in despair.

Had I time, I might furnish you examples of the practical power of earnestness almost indefinitely. The world is full of them. Look at Christopher Columbus. Consider the disheartening difficulties and vexatious delays he had to encounter,—the doubts of the skeptical, the sneers of the learned, the cavils of the cautious, and the opposition—or, at least, indifference of nearly all. And then the dangers of an untried, unexplored ocean. Do you think that he would have persevered, had he not possessed that earnest enthusiasm, which Washington Irving describes as a marked characteristic of the great discoverer? What

mind can conceive or tongue can tell the great results which have followed, and will continue to follow in all coming time, from what this single individual accomplished? A new continent discovered! Nations planted, whose wealth and power already begin to eclipse those of the old world, and whose empires stretch far away beneath the setting sun. Institutions of learning, liberty and religion, established on the broad basis of equal rights to all, and particularly that great (I had almost said that greatest) achievement of modern times, the free school system, which secures to the humblest child of the poorest peasant and day-laborer, his share in the great heritage of knowledge and of thought. It is true, America might have been discovered by what we call some fortunate accident. But, in all probability, it would have remained unknown for centuries, had not some earnest man like Columbus, arisen, whose adventurous spirit would be roused, rather than repressed, by difficulty and danger.

John Howard, the philanthropist, is another remarkable illustration of the power of intense earnestness joined with great decision of character.

"He spent his whole life," says Burke, "in taking the gauge of human misery,"—in visiting prisons and penitentiaries, and the abodes of poverty and wretchedness. He sought to alleviate human suffering wherever he found it,—to ameliorate the condition of the degraded, the distressed and the unfortunate by all the means in his power. In the prosecution of his object, difficulties did not discourage nor did dangers appal him. He travelled repeatedly on foot

over most of Europe, submitting to almost every hardship and privation, and we are told that the existence of the plague even did not deter him from visiting any place where he thought suffering humanity could be benefited by his presence.

John Foster says of him, that "the energy of his determination was so great that if, instead of being habitual, it had been shown only for a short time on particular occasions, it would have appeared a violent impetuosity. But because it was uninterrupted, it scarcely seemed to exceed the tone of a calm constancy. It was, however, the calmness of an intensity kept uniform by the nature of the human mind forbidding it to be more, and by the character of the individual forbidding it to be less. The habitual passion of his mind was a measure of feeling almost equal to the temporary extremes and paroxysms of common minds.

The moment of finishing his plans in deliberation, and commencing them in action, was the same. I wonder what must have been the amount of that bribe, in emolument or pleasure, that would have detained him a week inactive, after their final adjustment. The law which carries water down a declivity, was not more unconquerable and invariable than the determination of his feelings toward the main object. The importance of this object held his faculties in a state of excitement, which was too rigid to be affected by lighter interests, and on which therefore the beauties of nature and of art had no power. He had no leisure feeling for surveying the cities and monuments and artificial works of the countries

through which he passed. Like the invisible spirits, who fulfil their commission of philanthropy among mortals, he did not care to waste upon pictures, statues and sumptuous buildings that time, which must have been taken from the work to which he had consecrated his life. No man will ever visit Rome under such a despotic consciousness of duty, as to refuse himself time, as he did, for surveying the magnificence of its ruins. His earnest devotion to his single object of pursuit implied an inconceivable severity of conviction, that he had *one thing to do*, and that he who would do some great thing in this short life, must apply himself to the work with such a concentration of his forces, as shall seem to idle spectators, who live only to amuse themselves, like insanity."

- In clearness of thought and energy of purpose he was not inferior to Cromwell, Cardinal de Retz, Charles the Twelfth, Napoleon, Lord Thurlow, or Cæsar—men remarkable for their decision of character—to whom, it has been said, "Nature seems to have given heads of crystal, hearts of steel, and nerves of brass." While in all the finer sensibilities, which, united with decision and energy, go to constitute an *earnest* man, no one of these men can be compared to the great philanthropist of whom I have spoken. It was this single quality of *earnestness*, which enabled him to triumph over obstacles, which to others would have seemed insuperable, and has rendered *his* "one of the few—the immortal names," which mankind will never willingly let die.

Sir William Jones, who acquired the knowledge of twenty-eight languages, when asked *how* his wonder-

ful attainments in almost every branch of learning had been made, was accustomed to reply, "only by industry and regular application." And Newton, the prince of British sages, whose scientific discoveries will ever continue to delight and astonish mankind, ascribed his success, not to superior genius, but to superior industry—to the habit and the power he had acquired of holding his mind down steadily and for a long time to the study of an involved and difficult subject. "The discovery of gravitation, the grand secret of the universe," says Hamilton, "was not whispered in his ear by an oracle. It did not visit him in a morning dream. It did not fall into his idle lap a windfall from the clouds. But he reached it by self-denying toil, by midnight study, by the large command of accurate science, and by bending all his powers in one direction and keeping them thus bent."

So in every occupation of life requiring intellectual, or even physical exertion, *earnestness* is an essential element of success. Without it, a man may have the strength of Hercules or the mind of Newton, and yet accomplish nothing. He may live, and die, and yet leave behind him neither name nor memorial. Did you ever see a farmer, a mechanic or a merchant,—a man of any trade or profession, eminently successful, who did not apply himself in earnest to his business? Every poet, whose muse has clothed

" Whate'er the heart of man admires and loves,  
With music and with numbers,—"

whose breathing thoughts and winged words have thrilled the world, from the blind old bard of Scio to

the modern Homer, “whose soul was like a star, and dwelt apart,” has been an earnest man.

Every orator, whose burning eloquence has swayed listening thousands, just as the forest is swayed by the summer’s wind, has been an earnest man.

Demosthenes was in earnest, when he poured forth his Philippics in ancient Athens. Paul was in earnest, when, reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come, Felix trembled before him. Luther was in earnest, when, casting aside the polished reed of classical learning, he seized with a strong hand the iron trumpet of his mother-tongue, and blew with it a blast which roused Europe from the slumber of ages. Sheridan was in earnest at the trial of Hastings, when all parties were held chained and spell-bound by his eloquence. Brougham was in earnest, when, as we are told, “he thundered and lightened in the house of commons, until the knights of the shire absolutely clung to the benches for support, the ministers cowered behind the speaker’s chair for shelter, and the voting members started from their slumbers in the side galleries as if the last trumpet were ringing in their ears.”

And so of our own Ames and Henry. *They* were in earnest when, seeking to arouse their countrymen to united resistance of British oppression, they assured them that they “could almost hear the clanking of their chains,”—“that the blood of their sons should fatten their cornfields, and the warwhoop of the Indian should waken the sleep of the cradle.” And because they were *in earnest*, *their words were words of fire!*

Earnestness was the true secret of Whitefield's wonderful eloquence. He won the admiration of the skeptical Hume, not by his logic or his learning, but by his fervid, earnest eloquence.

David Garrick, the celebrated actor, was once asked by a clergyman, why the speaking of *actors* produced so much greater effect than that of *clergymen*. "Because," said Garrick, "we utter *fiction* as if it were *truth*, while *you* utter *truth* as if it were *fiction*;"—thus clearly implying, that *earnestness* is the very soul of all effective eloquence.

The train of thought I have presented, and the examples and illustrations I have given, show, I think, conclusively, that earnestness is an essential element of success in any business or profession; that the men who have moved the masses and wrought great improvements in society, have, almost without exception, been earnest men. The subject is a practical one, and applies, as it seems to me, with peculiar pertinency and force to the great educational cause, for whose advancement we meet together to-day. It answers the important practical question, How can the common schools of Vermont, or any other State, be made what they should be—the best schools of their grade? This is emphatically *the* great practical question, and the answer to it is, in a single word, *earnestness*.

If every political party would adopt and carry out to the letter and in its true spirit, the noble resolution adopted at a recent political convention in this State,\*

---

\* Vermont.

"That the education of the children of the State is a matter of public concern, which the State ought to care for, and the property of the State pay for ;"—asserting, as it does, the great democratic truth, that the public money ought to educate the public mind ;—if every legislator should feel, as did De Witt Clinton, "that the first duty of government, and the surest evidence of good government, is the encouragement of education ;"—if every patriot would cordially cherish the common schools as the firmest pillar of the State ;—if every lover of liberty and equality would bear in mind that they are, in fact, the most democratic institutions of our country, the great levellers of society —levelling *up* and not *down*, carrying the light and blessings of knowledge into the cottage of the poor as well as into the mansion of the rich, and making it possible for the sons of the humblest to occupy and adorn the highest stations of trust and responsibility ;—if the philanthropist and the Christian will seek to establish them on the only permanent basis, the enduring principles of Christianity, remembering the sentiment of a great statesman, "that human happiness has no perfect security but freedom; freedom, none but virtue; virtue, none but knowledge ;—and neither freedom, nor virtue, nor knowledge, has any vigor or immortal hope, except in the principles of the Christian faith and in the sanctions of the Christian religion ;"—in a single sentence, if the pulpit and the press would speak out upon this subject as they should speak, and the community generally would take hold of it in *serious earnest*, the object we seek would speedily be accomplished.

But, then, there is that little word *if*, which has spoiled so many fine theories and good bargains. And the practical question still returns, *how* shall the pulpit and the press be made to speak out? *how* shall the people generally, who are asleep upon this subject, be awakened and aroused to action, and that public opinion be created, which is “stronger than the power of kings?” I answer, that this must be done by the persevering earnestness of those who have begun to view this matter in its true light, and begun to feel its transcendent importance. Every great reform has owed its origin, and for the most part, its accomplishment, to the efforts of a few earnest-minded individuals. How did Luther, under God, effect the reformation? How did Howard reform the prison and penitentiary systems of Europe? Bonaparte, it is said, endeavored to make his soldiers believe that “*impossible*” was not good French; and the practical effect of such a belief was exemplified at the bridge of Lodi, on the plains of Marengo and Austerlitz, and a hundred other battle-fields, where Frenchmen fought under his banner, until the star of Napoleon grew pale on the field of Waterloo for ever.

“God,” says Chatterton, “has given us arms long enough to reach any object in the universe, if we will but stretch them out.” And, abating a little for a poet’s extravagance, the expression hardly exceeds the truth.

From examples like these, let the friends of common schools learn to face difficulties, and feel that God has made nearly all things possible to earnest and resolute men. They can, if they will, raise these

schools to almost any assignable degree of excellence, and make them, in a vastly higher and better sense than they now are, a blessing to the children of the present and coming generations.

I have insisted the more strongly upon earnestness, without stopping to point out the particular ways in which it may be manifested with the best hope of success, because I have long felt that, on the subject of improving our schools, the main difficulty is in *waking up* the people generally to a sense of their vast importance,—in exciting a degree of *feeling*, which shall prompt them to vigorous action. Their *theory* is already better than their *practice*. Their *heads* are nearer right than their *hearts*. The *truths* of education are readily admitted, and are often considered *so true*, that they lose all the power of truth. As a poet has said,

“ *They've been so long remembered, they're forgot.*”

Hence the necessity of *earnestness* to recall and bring out these dormant, half-forgotten truths.

As in religion, he that *doeth* the will of God shall know of the doctrine, so in education, the earnest and active friends of the cause will easily find out “ *the ways and means*” of advancing it.

Had I time, however, and were it necessary, I might point out some of the *ways* of benefiting common schools. I might speak of the importance of attending the District School meeting, and selecting the best man for a committee, and making him feel that you are committing important interests to his hands. I might explain the advantages of an ample

school-room, well arranged, lighted and ventilated ; and show, if need be, that a room so constructed as to admit the air freely at the bottom, and the rain at the top, and so heated as to afford a practical illustration of all the varieties of climate in the torrid, temperate and frigid zones,—and so small that the scholars are crowded together like the passengers in an old-fashioned stage-coach, before railroads were invented, is not *the place* for a good school. In visiting such a school-room, crammed full of children, I have often been reminded of a tavern I once heard of somewhere in New Hampshire, in which the sleeping apartments were said to be so small, that the inmates were obliged to get up and go into another room, in order to turn over. In some of the school-rooms that I have seen, the scholars can hardly turn round without going out of doors. Is it possible, under such circumstances, to accomplish the ends which should be aimed at in education ?

I might speak of the necessity of punctual and constant attendance, the importance of uniform textbooks, and the beneficial effects of parental interest and coöperation. But I forbear ; for the time would fail me.

There is one means, however, so intimately connected with my subject, that I may not omit it ; and it is *one* which I regard as, on the whole, *the most important*. I mean *the employment of earnest and devoted teachers*.

The influence of an intelligent and earnest teacher, whose book is in his head, and whose heart is in his work, is immense ; and to it must we look mainly, as

it seems to me, for the improvement of our schools. *For as is the teacher, so generally will be the school.* If the teacher is unneat in his person, slovenly in his dress, coarse in his language, or uncultivated in his manners, these disagreeable traits will surely reappear in his pupils. If he is sleepy and sluggish, you will find a sleepy and sluggish school. You will there find the scholars yawning over their books, and lounging about with their heads in one seat, themselves in a second, and their heels in a third, contracting habits of laziness, which will cling to them like the poisoned garment of Nessus, spoken of in ancient fable, and will prove their ruin.

So also the noisy teacher will make a noisy school.

On the other hand, if the teacher is a **MAN**, in the best sense of that word, intelligent, refined, energetic, and in earnest, he will leave his impress upon the whole school. His influence will reach parents as well as pupils, and the good accomplished can hardly be estimated.

Do I then overrate the importance of earnestness in teachers? *They*, beyond all others, as it seems to me, should be earnest men. They should have something of the true Spartan self-devotion, which makes a man resolve "*to succeed or die.*"

This is demanded by the position which they now occupy, and by the nature of their occupation,—its responsibility and far-reaching results.

First, then, the teacher's present position in society demands earnestness.

Some fifteen or twenty years ago, one of England's greatest statesmen, speaking of the elevation of Wel-

lington, *a mere military chieftain*, as he sneeringly called him, to the premiership, said, "Field Marshal, the Duke of Wellington, may take the army,—he may take the navy,—he may take the great seal,—he may take the mitre. I make him a present of them all. Let him come on, sword in hand, against the constitution, and the English people will not only beat him back, but laugh at his assaults. For the *mere soldier* can do nothing in this age. And why? Because," as he significantly adds, "there is *another* personage abroad—a personage less imposing—in the eyes of some, perhaps, insignificant. THE SCHOOL-MASTER IS ABROAD; and I trust to him, armed with his primer, against the soldier in full military array." Ever since this high compliment was given, the business of teaching both in England and in this country has been rising in dignity and importance. Teachers now occupy a proud position. There is no class of men, if we except the clergy, who are exercising a greater influence. They are forming the taste, and developing the minds, and moulding the manners and morals of the generation which shall succeed the present in the high places of power and responsibility. Their present position was not attained without labor, nor can it be *maintained* without earnest effort. The time has gone by, when Ichabod Cranes and Master Dominies will answer the public expectation. The teacher must now be wide awake—must know what he is about—must understand "the *whys* and the *wherefores*,"—and be able, as Locke Amsden says, "*to give the reason of things.*"

Again; the nature of the teacher's occupation is such as to require earnestness.

His work is a difficult one. I have thought that it requires a quicker wit and a wiser prudence, more tact, more talent, more every thing that goes to constitute a shrewd, common sense man to manage successfully a common school, than would be requisite in almost any other profession. The teacher of such a school, at first, meets his pupils as strangers. He must at once *map out* and classify his scholars, so as to give to each and all something to be done. He must furnish employment for *them*, or *they* will furnish employment for *him*. He must teach a great variety of studies. While hearing the recitation of one class, he must keep an eye upon the rest of the school. His scholars usually differ widely in age, capacity, attainments, dispositions, and in all their habits of thought and action. He must encourage the timid, incite the sluggish, detect the cunning, and reprove the foward. He must bear patiently with the ignorant—sometimes with the impertinent—perhaps the impudent ;—and must speak a fitting word, at the fitting time and in the fitting manner, to each and to all, if he would be a successful teacher. To do all these things well, and many more, would surely seem to require a man who had his wits about him; one, who knew distinctly *what* to do, and *how* to do it. A man who does not think more than once or twice a week, and then does not have more than half a thought, is not fit to be a teacher. Nor is that man fit for the office, whom it takes half an hour to turn

round, and then does not get more than half round. A man must be *awake* himself, if he would effectually *wake up* the minds of others. He must be himself in earnest, if he would make his pupils in earnest and train them, as far as human power and agency can train them, for usefulness and happiness in life.

Surely the teacher's work—its vast responsibility, demands earnestness. He is educating immortal minds—minds that will live on, when every star which now looks down upon us like the eye of an angel, shall have faded forever from the evening sky. Look into the school-room. In the glowing language of Horace Mann, — “Survey those thickly-seated benches. Before us are clustered the children of to-day, the men of to-morrow, and the immortals of eternity. What costly works of art, what splendid galleries of sculpture or of painting, won by a nation's arms, or purchased by a nation's wealth, are comparable in value to the treasures which we have in these children? How many living, palpitating nerves centre in their young hearts;—and as they shall advance in life, other living and palpitating nerves, which no man can number, shall go out from their bosoms to twine around other hearts, and to feel their throbs of pleasure or of pain, of rapture or of agony. How many fortunes of others shall be linked with their fortunes and share an equal fate. As yet to the hearts of these young beings crime has not brought in its retinue of fears, nor disappointment its sorrows. *Their joys are joys, and their hopes more real than our realities*; and as the visions of the *future* burst

upon their imaginations, their eye kindles like the young eagle's at the morning sunbeam."

Can you look upon such a scene as this without emotion—without feeling your spirit stirred within you?

And again, contemplate the influence of the teacher in its far-reaching results.

We none of us, perhaps, think enough of the amazing truth, that in a world like this, influence never dies. The good and evil which men do, live after them." And hence it comes to pass, that no man, when he dies, is wholly dead. The man dies, but his influence lives. An arrow may cut the air, and yet leave no trace behind to show us where it passed. A ship may plough the ocean, and the succeeding wave efface from the bosom of the waters the impression it made. Not so with men. *They* leave behind them an ineffaceable impression. Their influence will live, and spread and extend itself in ever widening circles, until we can by no human arithmetic estimate its power.

Now if this is true of all men, even the obscurest and most insignificant of earth's millions, much more is it true of teachers. *Their* influence is direct and powerful. It is the very object of their office to exert it and make it impressive. They are acting upon the young. Every morning, as they enter the school-room, they are about to lay a moulding hand on forming minds; and every evening, when their work is done, they have left a deathless impression upon the heart and character.

If the teacher's influence is thus permanent and powerful, surely then he ought to be awake and in earnest.

It is said of Longinus, and said to his praise, that

*“He was himself the great sublime he drew.”*

So the teacher should seek to realize in himself his own ideal of excellence, and be a *model man*.

He should labor, not for money merely, nor for reputation even, but for something higher, holier. He should remember that every child has a deathless mind—and that every mind is a priceless gem, which he should seek to polish with the skill and assiduity of an artist. He should bring to this work his best energies, his brightest powers, his holiest resolutions. I would fain have him able to look upon his pupils, and say, as did the Roman matron, turning to her children, “**THESE ARE MY JEWELS.**” I would fain have him touch, with a skilful hand, that mysterious instrument—the human mind—

“ That harp, whose tones, whose living tones,  
Are left forever in the strings.”



## LECTURE IV.

---

### THE ESSENTIALS OF EDUCATION.

---

BY THOMAS H. PALMER,  
OF PITTSFORD, VT.

---

MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE INSTITUTE,

When I had the honor of addressing you some fifteen years ago, this society was in its infancy. The field of education then lay comparatively untilled. All were alike pioneers. Every part of the great subject was fresh and new. The schools in no part of the country were prominently in advance. Whatever sentiment, therefore, would apply in one part of the country, was equally suitable in every other.

How very differently stands the case now! In the states where most of you reside, the science of education has been kept steadily before the public mind for a long series of years. The legislatures have from time to time granted every facility for improvement. The highest order of talents, too, has been consecrated to the one grand purpose of elevating the community through the only medium by which it can be elevated, the COMMON SCHOOL. Here, in Vermont, on the

contrary, we are only just *beginning* to move. Our schools are hardly better than yours were fifteen or twenty years ago. And, worst of all, our community have not as yet awakened even to a dim conception of the objects for which they should strive. From these circumstances, a serious difficulty arose in my mind. You have invited me to address you. But to whom shall I speak? To your society—a body that has for so many years been ardently engaged in the study of the science? or to the people of Vermont, who may be considered as mere tyros on this great topic, and to whom of course elementary principles are the most improving and interesting? Such was the dilemma which presented itself on first receiving your call. My hesitation, however, was but for a moment. For surely, thought I, the members of the Institute do not visit these distant regions in search of their own improvement. No. They come to enlighten us with their long experience, to encourage us to perseverance, to urge us to push forward on the noble career on which we have just entered.

I shall devote this discourse, then, chiefly to the wants of Vermont, confining my attention principally to the defects of her schools. But, although this will be my main object, let me here say to the gentlemen of the Institute, that I shall be very pleasingly disappointed, if many, very many of my remarks be not found applicable to the best of schools, be they where they may. For every where, I fear, will still be found too much parrot-training; too many artificial processes; too many words without ideas; too much

cramming with the notions or dogmas of others; too little development of our own powers.

But enough of explanation and apology. Let us turn in earnest to our subject.

*The essentials of a good school education.* What are the essentials of education? What is it we seek for, or, rather, what is it we *ought* to seek for in sending our children to school? All will admit that reading forms one of the most important items in school education. But there are two kinds of reading, which, for the want of more appropriate terms, I shall distinguish as *artificial* reading and *intellectual* reading. As very serious evils arise from the want of clear ideas on this subject, and as one of these terms is often practically mistaken for the other, it will be well that both be distinctly defined.

By *artificial* reading, then, is meant correct utterance of language, without the *slightest attention* to the sense of the passage; the accurate emission of mere sounds, with the delivery of which the mind is wholly engrossed, or (which is quite as probable), is floating about in a sort of dreamy reverie. This is the kind of reading commonly heard in the schools. No matter whether the passage is intelligible or unintelligible. Every phrase, nay, every word, may be perfectly clear and simple, still, if the mind of the reader be exclusively engaged with the pronunciation of the words, or if his thoughts be occupied with matters of an entirely different nature, the reading in either case is purely artificial.

*Intellectual* reading, on the contrary, implies attention to the *ideas* of the author. It may, or may not

be accompanied by oral reading. If it be, that is, if the reading be aloud, the sentences may or may not be gracefully delivered. The pauses and inflexions may be altogether neglected, or they may be duly attended to. Every word may be properly pronounced, or they may not be pronounced at all (as in silent reading, or, as in the case of the deaf and dumb); still, if, as the eye glances over the lines, the ideas of the author are clearly and strongly impressed on the mind, this is *good intellectual* reading. And nothing less than this is deserving of the title.

Agreeably to this definition, *intellectual* reading confers a power over our whole literature. It is the key to the whole cyclopædia of science. He who has acquired it, has all knowledge at command.

Not so, however, with *artificial* reading. This, of itself, confers no such power. The articulation may be distinct and clear. Every word, every syllable, may receive its appropriate force, its peculiar sound. The inflexions may be skilfully used. The pauses, both grammatical and rhetorical, may be measured with a stop-watch regularity. Still, if the reader has not a *habit* of constant attention to the *sense* of what he reads; the power of fixing his mind *where* he pleases; of retaining it there *as long as* he pleases; the art of reading is to him a complete nullity: if the acquisition of knowledge be the object in view, here, certainly, is an utter failure.

Now to which of these acquirements do our schools devote their energies? Do the pupils read with intelligence, or is their reading little else than a mechanical operation? the emission of certain sounds

at the sight of the appropriate characters? Let experience answer. Do they, can they make a practical use of our literature, of the rich legacy of the past, the exhaustless store of wealth which perisheth not in the using? Have they acquired the power of self-education? Alas! no. The education of the masses is finished, literally finished, at school. The power of self-instruction, which might so easily be acquired by all, belongs now only to the gifted few. Depend upon it, the cause of the indisposition of our community towards books of solid information, the cause of the general taste for the light, frothy literature of the day, is *not* a low appreciation of the pleasures and advantages of science. No, indeed. It is because men believe science to be beyond their reach, that they make no exertion to attain it. And in this belief they are correct. It *is* beyond their reach. For want of the power of concentration, the power of fixing the mind on the *one* object with which it is engaged, the art of reading is an *ignis fatuus*, a mere *nominal* advantage, from which but trifling good arises to the great body of our people. Allow me to mention a striking instance of this fact.

A few years ago, on a journey through New Hampshire, I passed the night in the house of a clergyman. In the course of conversation I happened to speak of the importance of teachers adopting the simple measures necessary to accustom children to concentrate their minds on what they read, and of the serious evils resulting from the want of this power. My friend acknowledged the importance of the subject, but doubted whether inattention could be so universal

as I alleged. "I will try, however," said he, "one of the measures you recommend." This was accordingly done the following morning in his religious exercise, with what effect you shall hear. The family consisted of the minister, his sister, and five sons, from seventeen to seven or eight years of age. Selecting the latter part of the 10th chapter of Mark, he told the boys that the portion of Scripture was to be short this morning, but that he should expect them to give very close attention, as he intended to ask them a number of questions respecting it. He then read as follows: "And they came to Jericho; and, as he went out of Jericho, with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the wayside, begging." Turning now to his eldest boy, who sat next him, he asked, "What did the blind man say to Jesus?" The boy naturally enough stared in astonishment. "I ask you," repeated his father, "What did the blind man say to Jesus? you don't know yet; but you are just going to read it. Pay close attention, now, that you may tell me when you have done." The boy then read the following verse, with tolerable fluency: "And, when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth he began to cry out and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon me." "Now," said the father, "what did blind Bartimeus say to Jesus? Tell me what you have just read." The boy blushed, but uttered not a syllable. With a look of disappointment, the father then turned to his second son, and said, "Now *don't* you be so stupid as your brother, John. Do pay attention to what you are about

to read. I shall want you to tell us what the blind man said to Jesus. Read your verse, and then let us know." He accordingly read verse 48: "And many charged him that he should hold his peace. But he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me." "Now tell me," said the father, "what *did* the man say to Jesus? Tell me what you have *just read*." The boy hesitated a moment, looked upward, and then cast his eye on the book. But his father would not suffer that. "Close your book," said he, "and try to recollect what you have read." He obeyed. But the attempt was vain. The habit of day-dreaming was too firmly fixed. Not a word had he to say. The disappointment of the father may easily be conceived. He pursued the experiment no farther, however. He read the remainder of the chapter himself, and closed the exercise as usual by prayer.

Now let me not be understood to allege that *all* children are as badly trained as these. This may be, it probably is, an extreme case. But I fear that few are really aware of the extent of the evil. At the close of lectures in which I have touched on this topic, I have frequently had assurances from intelligent, yes, from educated men, that they had always imagined this want of the power of concentration to be *peculiar* to themselves, not shared generally with the community. And I think I may venture to assert that in nine-tenths of our schools, select as well as common, the children in their reading-lessons are engaged exclusively with sounds, mere words without ideas. How frequently do we hear, from those who

feel anxious about the improvement of education, of the importance of children *understanding* what they read ; how desirable that teachers should be ready to *explain* every thing, &c. Understand what they read ! No, no ; be assured the difficulty does not lie here. Do you think those great boys in New Hampshire did not know the meaning of the words, "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy upon me?" No. Reading-books for children are now so plain and clear, that every child can understand them. But explanations of the meaning of words and sentences will never confer on our youth the power of concentration. That must be acquired by a very different process.

In the journey of which I have already spoken, I spent the night with a certain deacon of the Congregational church. For his reading exercise in the morning he took a Psalm, one of the verses of which I did not clearly comprehend. When he had finished, I asked what ideas he attached to the words. "I did not notice it," was the reply. Not notice it ! Yes. I fear this is too much the case with most of our reading, and hence the trifling advantages derived from it. We *do* not, we *cannot* notice it. The mind wanders off at random the moment we open the book. Most of our teachers are ignorant of the existence of such a defect ; and those who are aware of it, know not the remedy. Oh ! that they could be prevailed on for a moment to lay aside their mechanical processes, their everlasting gabble about nouns and verbs, pronouns and prepositions, to drop for awhile their needless anxiety about pauses and cadences,

that all would unite in one great effort to bestow on every child his precious birthright, to remove those obstructions that now effectually exclude the masses from the temple of science. But unfortunately even our best teachers are so completely absorbed with rules for pronunciation, with directions about accent and emphasis, slides and inflexions, the mere husk and shell of learning, that the real kernel, what ought to be the *sine qua non* of the school, slips unnoticed through their fingers.

How is this serious evil to be remedied? By means equally simple and effectual. It must never be allowed to grow. We must eschew that most egregious mistake of neglecting the first steps. Prevention is easy. A radical cure next to impossible. Bad habits must not be allowed to germinate and take root, in the vain and delusive hope of afterwards eradicating them. One would think, that every man's own experience of the extreme difficulty, not to say impossibility of the thing, would have cured us of this weakness. But no. "Any thing will do to begin with," is still our motto. In this, as in a thousand other cases, we still allow the weeds to sprout and mature, and thus to choke and destroy the good seed. No thought is bestowed on this habit, till it is too firmly fixed to be broken down.

The child, then, must be accustomed from the *very first*, to attend to the sense as well as to the sound of what he reads. Not even the short and slow sentences of infancy must be neglected. Most good teachers give some attention to this in their schools. But, owing to its having been commenced at too late a pe-

riod, or owing to a want of thoroughness and determination, the exercise is generally a complete failure, and at best furnishes only the most meagre and inadequate details. And even when there is an apparent success, when strictly looked into it will generally be found to be fallacious. For teachers are too apt to be satisfied with an answer or a description *from the class*, instead of from each individual. It is sufficient for them that the question has been answered. They hardly ever observe, or, if they do, it is without avail, that not more than one or two bright minds have been employed. The rest have done nothing, have learned nothing. And here let me say, that the evil is enhanced by allowing simultaneous answers from a class. Though it takes a nice ear to detect the fact, it is a serious truth, that there is generally a *leader*, on whom the others unconsciously, but with one consent, devolve the whole labor of thinking. All the trouble they take is to follow this leader so closely as to make the answer appear simultaneous. Every one must have observed, that in singing schools, and in the choirs of our churches, each individual appears to sing from a music book. This, however, is only in appearance. So long as the singing is in chorus, all moves smoothly and harmoniously. But let an individual be called on to sing alone, and, unless the piece is familiar, ten to one he cannot sing a note. Nearly all the faculty that has *really* been acquired, is that of closely following a leader. Examine for yourselves, gentlemen, and you will find that it is precisely the same in the common school. Let us have done, then, with simultaneous answer-

ing, unless our teachers can be more on the alert, and possessed of a quicker ear to detect this pernicious practice.

And now, gentlemen, will you excuse an encroachment on your patience? The faculty of concentration, of which I have been treating, has so important a bearing on the whole range of education, from the common school to the university, nay, still farther, to the student's closet to the end of life, that I must trespass so far, even at the risk of a smile from my friends, the grave doctors and professors around me, as to descend to particulars, that may be thought below the dignity of a lecture before this Institution. What I propose is, to give a few examples of the manner of questioning on the most simple subjects. Let us suppose, then, the teacher to be engaged with a pupil just beginning to read, who commences thus:

*Pupil.* "See the pretty bird's nest!"

*Teacher.* What must we see?

*P.* "The bird's nest."

*T.* Yes. The pretty bird's nest. Go on.

*P.* "This is the bird's home."

*T.* This! What does *this* stand for? What is the bird's home?

*P.* "The nest."

*T.* Yes. But you ought to have said the pretty bird's nest. (Attention should be required to the most minute particulars. Remember we are now forming a habit to last for life.) Go on, dear.

*P.* "How soft and warm it is!"

*T.* It is! what is? what is soft and warm? what does the word *it* stand for?

*P.* "It stands for the pretty bird's nest."

*T.* That is right. Now what did you read about the pretty bird's nest?

*P.* "That it was soft and warm."

*T.* Now tell me all that you have read in this lesson.

In another lesson the pupil reads the following sentences :

*P.* "Has the bird hands to make *its* nest?"

*T.* *Its* nest. What does the word *its* stand for?

—Very well. Go on.

*P.* "No. But God has taught it how to make it."

*T.* What does the word *no* stand for? What is meant by *no*?

*P.* "No hands."

*T.* Very good. But it stands for more than that. It means, "the bird has no hands to make its nest." After *no*, you read, "But God has taught it." Taught what? What does this *it* stand for?—Very well. "Taught it how to make it." Make what? What does *this* *it* stand for?—Very good. So here, you see, are two *its* that have different meanings. The first stands for the bird, and the other the bird's nest.

But here the universal objection meets us. This is all very good. But we have not *time* for such minutiæ. Time, indeed! We have time enough to teach reading in such a way that it will be of little or no practical use. But we have none to teach it so that it shall be an invaluable treasure to the child. We have sufficient time to give him a smattering of

geography, arithmetic, algebra, and geometry, the most of which, or a great part at least, will be forgotten in a few years after leaving school. But we have no time to give him a power which will place all knowledge at his command. And besides, it is quite a mistake to imagine that it will demand any sacrifice of time whatever. For a child learns to read in a much shorter period when his mind is thus actively and pleasingly employed. Every sentence gives him delight, and the context, the meaning of the passage, helps him to a vast number of words, which can only be acquired otherwise by painful exertion. And, after all, it is but for a very short time indeed that minute questioning is required. The great object to be aimed at is, that the child or class shall be able, independently of all helps of this kind, to give, without prompting, a clear and exact account in their own words, of all that has been read, at the close of the recitation. This is a practice that should never fail to follow *every* reading exercise. The questions are to be considered merely as the go-cart or leading-strings of infancy. These are to be laid aside by degrees, and as rapidly as possible. An attentive teacher, who is properly impressed with the importance of concentration, will know, by the countenance or tone of voice, the very moment a child's mind begins to wander, and recal him by an appropriate question. Pronouns afford the most convenient terms for this purpose. Who, or what, is this *he*, *she*, *it*, or *them*? If the reader hesitate to answer, he should be turned back to the place where his mind left the subject, and the supervision should not be

confined to the reader. The whole class should be required to be alike attentive. The master's eye should learn to detect at a glance the heedless scholar, and recal his wandering mind by a question.

But this error in our schools of devoting exclusive attention to the sound of words, not only causes us to miss the grand object of education, the acquisition of knowledge,—it is in every respect a failure. For it is impossible to make even a good rhetorical reader merely by the aid of rules. These may give you the *body* of reading. But the essential requisite of a *soul* is wanting. In order to make others feel, a man must *himself* feel what he reads. And how can he do that, if his mind be elsewhere?

Hazlitt, speaking of two celebrated players, draws the following striking comparison between natural and artificial *acting*. Every word is equally applicable to reading.

“I liked Mademoiselle Mars,” says he, “exceedingly well, till I saw Madame Pasta, whom I liked much better. The reason is, the one is the perfection of artificial, the other of natural acting. There is an attention to minutiae, a mannerism about Mademoiselle Mars. She does not give an entire loose to her feelings, nor trust to the unpremeditated and habitual impulse of her situation. It seems as if she might be acting from marginal directions to her part (just as a boy would read from a page stuck full of marks for inflections and rhetorical pauses). When she speaks, she articulates with perfect clearness and propriety; but it is the facility of a singer executing a difficult part. The case is that of habit, not of nature.

Whatever she does is right in the intention, and she does not carry it too far. But she appears to say beforehand, '*This* I must do; I must not do *that*.' Her acting is an inimitable study, or consummate rehearsal of the part. But she hardly yet appears to have *assumed the character*. Something more is wanting, and that something you find in Madame Pasta. If Mademoiselle Mars has to smile, a slight and evanescent expression of pleasure passes across the *surface* of her face, twinkles in her *eyelids*, dimples her *chin*, compresses her *lips*, and plays on every *separate* feature. When Madame Pasta smiles, a beam of joy seems to have struck upon her *heart*, and to irradiate her countenance. Her *whole face* is bathed and melted in expression, instead of its gleaming from *particular points*. When she speaks, it is music. When she moves, it is *without thinking* whether she is graceful or not. When she weeps, it is a fountain of tears, not a few trickling drops, that glitter and vanish the instant after. Mademoiselle Mars always plays as if she were before the court. She *knows* she is in the presence of an audience. Madame Pasta thinks nothing of the audience. She gives herself entirely up to the impression of her part, loses her power over herself, is *led away by her feelings* either to an expression of stupor or of artless joy, borrows beauty from deformity, charms unconsciously, and is transformed into the very being she represents. She does not *act* the character. She *is it*. She *looks* it. She *breathes* it. She does not *study* for an *effect*; but strives to possess herself of the *feeling* which should dictate what she is to do; and *this*,

without labor, gives birth to the proper degree of grace, dignity, ease or force."—*Hazlitt's Table Talk, slightly altered.*

Now what is the inference from this? Why, that, to be eloquent, we must forget our rules, give ourselves wholly up to nature. We must speak or read from the heart. We must place ourselves in the position of the author, and deliver *his* sentiments as *our own*. Allow me to quote a few sentences from some of our elocutionists to give additional force to this position.

Dr. Porter, whose treatise on elocution is to be found in all our schools, says: "The parts of *external oratory*, as voice, look, gesture, are only *instruments* by which the *soul* acts; when the inspiration of soul is absent, these instruments *cannot* produce eloquence."—*Porter's Analysis*, p. 19. Again: "All directions as to management of the voice must be regarded as *subsidiary* to expression of feeling, or they are *worse* than useless."—*ib. p. 18.*

The celebrated Sheridan Knowles says: "Emotion is the thing. One flash of passion on the cheek, one beam of feeling from the eye, one thrilling note of sensibility from the tongue, have a thousand times more value than any exemplification of mere rules, where feeling is absent."

Dr. Blair says: "What we *conceive* clearly, and *feel* strongly, we *will naturally* express with clearness and strength."

Finally, Mr. Sweet, in his Practical Elocution, says: "So surely as an individual *thinks* of his elocution at the time he is speaking, just so surely he

will fail of producing any other effect upon his hearers than to convince them that he takes no interest in his subject. As a bird taken from the illimitable fields of nature, and deprived of the air and foliage of the forest, loses the brilliancy of its plumage; so the *slightest appearance* of being governed by rules is fatal to eloquence."—*Sweet's Practical Elocution*, p. 19.

Are the rules of oratory, then, entirely useless? Have our Porters, our Russells, our Sweets, been laboring altogether in vain? By no means. It is highly important that *teachers* should understand the cause of every failure, both of rhetorical action and expression, to enable them clearly and distinctly to point out to their pupils, when necessary, the means of correction. For them, accordingly, the rules of rhetoric form an admirable study. But to present them to the young beginner learning to read, who has already difficulties more than enough in his path, is alike pernicious and absurd. They are a serious stumbling-block, and add very much to the danger of forming the habit of wandering of mind, which is so ruinous to our youth. Besides, if the proper course be strictly followed from the very first, of total exclusion of all parrot-reading from the school, the child will need little more rhetorical direction in learning to read than he does in learning to talk. The rules are precisely the same in both, and yet whoever heard of their being applied to the latter? No. We learn to use the proper inflections and pauses in the same way, and at the same time as we learn the use of words. The slightest attention to the conversation

either of adults or of children, will show that the obstacle to good reading is *not ignorance* of the proper place and manner of using, either of emphasis, pauses, or inflections. They cannot quote a single rule, and yet they apply them all correctly. Watch strictly, and you will find that no one is ever in the least at a loss in these matters. And would it not be the same in reading, were we accustomed to read intellectually from the first? What say you? But, unfortunately, the whole mind is absorbed in rules. We have rules for pronunciation, rules for inflections, rules for rhetorical pauses, and rules for emphasis. While the *meaning*, which alone can guide safely through the whole, is entirely neglected.

But reading, though very important, is not the only medium of knowledge. The ear, as well as the eye, is one of the great inlets of the mind. To *listen with attention*, is as important a qualification in a freeman as to read with attention. Enter one of our churches in the midst of the service, look around on the dull, listless countenances, observe the heavy, drowsy eyes of the nominal hearers, even in the most intelligent society, and say whether the community are fitted for the enjoyment of their great religious privileges; whether the people are *capable* of attending to religious worship as they ought. But why look at others? Are we not conscious that *we, ourselves*, one and all of us, are lamentably deficient in this power over the attention? Do *we* hear more than short, unconnected snatches of those discourses prepared at such an expense of time and talent? Do we not ourselves habitually indulge in day-dreams in the sanc-

tuary? This subject reminds me of a recipe from a physician to a lady, who complained that green cucumbers, of which she was exceedingly fond, always disagreed with her. I will tell you, madam, said he, a method of using them, which will prevent their injuring the most delicate stomach. Cut them into very thin slices, put them in a plate of strong vinegar, add a little salt and pepper, and then—toss them out of the window. Do we not practically adopt this physician's advice with respect to public religious instruction? We expend vast sums in the erection and endowment of academies, colleges, and theological seminaries, for preparing the ministry for their arduous duties. The landscape is every where embellished with edifices whose spires, in the language of the poet, point the path to Heaven, and where the great body of the people spend one-seventh of their time ostensibly for the purpose chiefly of receiving religious instruction. And hundreds, nay, thousands of intelligent men have spent the prime and vigor of their days in preparing themselves to impart this instruction, which still, in fact, occupies the greater share of their attention. And yet, after all this vast outlay, is not the greater part of it, owing to a defect in primary education, absolutely wasted, thrown away, tossed out of the window?

Nor is this all. To say nothing of the discrepancies which exist in the evidence of respectable men under examination as witnesses, as to matters which they have seen with their own eyes, or heard with their own ears,—passing by the difficulties that arise in families and neighborhoods, the blunders commit-

ted by workmen in attending to directions, all arising from the universal habit of hearing a little and guessing the rest,—passing by all these, only suffer me to lead you into one of our court-rooms, and there cast your eyes upon the jury-box, and say whether these men, to whom are entrusted the care of our property, reputation, liberty and life, are really competent to the task imposed on them. Supposing even that they possessed the most acute judgment, are they capable of controlling their attention for several consecutive hours, so as really to *hear* the whole before them? Alas! no. We *know* that they are not. Their verdict must either be based on the dictum of the judge, or be a mere guess-work. That law is a lottery, has become a proverb. And yet we pass on from generation to generation, without taking a single step towards the development of this most indispensable part of our nature. How long shall so serious an evil be patiently borne? Shall we suffer another generation of dreamers to enter on the stage of life? Surely not. Let us determine that so important a matter as the cultivation of the faculty of attention in youth shall be no longer delayed. And let it be in early youth. For in no other period of life can it be so thoroughly developed. I have put the question to a large number of educated men, whether they have succeeded in conquering that pernicious habit of day-dreaming whilst reading or listening. I never found but one who even pretended that he had.

Since the above was written, I have met with a sermon by Dr. Anderson, one of the Secretaries of the American Board of Foreign Missions, which bears so

strongly on this point, that I trust you will excuse a short extract.

“ We will, then, suppose a pious man, but wanting in control over his thoughts, to be reading in the Scriptures. He is really desirous of understanding what he reads, and, of course, makes an effort to read with attention ; and for a short time his attention is fixed. But this is for a short time only ; for soon his mind is invaded, and his thoughts are diverted by another train of ideas foreign from the chapter before him, until, at length, he is startled at perceiving how much he has read that has failed to awaken in his mind so much as a single idea.

“ The same man enters his closet for prayer. He assumes a reverent posture, and commences his petitions in an audible voice, as helping the attention. Meanwhile he discovers another train of ideas, or, more probably, successive, broken trains. His endeavors to expel them do but increase their number, and distract his attention the more. Were his prayer written out, and the intrusive thoughts interlined as they actually rise in his mind, we should have a painful illustration how his attention is divided while he is addressing the Most High.

“ So in public prayer, in the house of God. One person leads in the prayer, and all in the congregation profess to offer up the same petitions. But suppose the heart-searching God were to put forth his finger, and write the prayer upon the wall ; and that he were to write also, in parallel columns to it, the actual thoughts, meanwhile, of each professed wor-

shipper. What a fearful exhibition there would be of thoughts foreign to the occasion ;—about business ! about dress ! about worldly pleasures, past, present, or anticipated ! And, were it possible for these thoughts all to speak out at the same time, what a confusion of sounds should we hear ! Yet something like this, too often, must our public prayers be, as God hears them. For to the ear of God every thought has a voice.

“ And so entirely wanting in religious discipline are the thoughts of many persons, that even the mere allusions in the prayer of him who leads the devotions, are enough to keep their thoughts wandering. Thus : the minister prays for those, who “ go down to the sea in ships, and do business on the great waters.” This sends off their thoughts to their own ships, or their foreign investments, or the state of the markets, and their prospects of loss or gain. The minister prays for rain in a time of drought, or for fruitful seasons, or he gives thanks for an abundant harvest. This sets them thinking of their crops, and of the influence the drought, or rain, or harvest, will have on the price of some one or more of the products of the earth. The minister prays for our rulers ; and in how many minds does this excite thoughts of the latest intelligence, or else of political schemes, prospects, or results.

“ Similar remarks might be made concerning other exercises of the house of God. Indeed, who of us would be willing to have the mere intellectual history of the hour he spends in this holy place (i. e. of his

W. W. C.

thoughts merely,) written by the omniscient God, for the perusal of his most intimate friend? I believe, not one."

Again, towards the close of his discourse, he observes :

" It only remains for each one to inquire, how far his own thoughts have been brought into this blessed captivity. Are we able to read even the shortest chapter in the Bible, without wandering thoughts? Can we pray without them? Can we meditate, even for a short time, without them, upon any one religious subject? Let us not lose sight of the importance of this subject to ourselves individually. Whoever of us has his thoughts in spiritual subjection, has gained the entire mastery of them. Not only so, he has fought the grand battle, has performed the most difficult task in life. His is the blessed liberty of the gospel—*the liberty of thought*. His mind is no longer the slave of circumstances; it is dependent on nothing without. At the command of the will, it moves in any direction and to any object."

On this part of my subject I have only further to remark, that I fear Dr. Anderson was recommending the next thing to an impossibility to his auditory. The sapling may be twisted into any form. But who can bend the oak? No, no. If our people are ever to acquire the power of concentration, are ever to become freemen, in the true sense of the word, the work must be achieved in the pliant period of infancy.

But how? How shall such a command over the wandering thoughts be attained? By the same means which have been already pointed out in speak-

ing of reading. It must be called forth by frequent regularly-repeated exercise. The teacher can confer no new power. The soul of the infant contains the germs of all his possible faculties. But all require to be unfolded and strengthened by practice, else they lie dwarfed, blinded, dead. Of what wonderful capabilities is the tongue possessed! It can melt by music. It can rouse by eloquence. It can cause a multitude to heave like the waves of the ocean. Yet, simply for want of use, how completely dormant lies all this power in the deaf and dumb. It is the same with the powers of the soul. They must be drawn forth and called into activity by steady practice, or they are wholly impotent, inert, motionless.

Let, then, the practice of reading, or addressing a school in some way or other, be one of its indispensable and daily exercises. And, as already recommended when speaking of reading, let the pupils, *at first*, be questioned at the *end of every sentence*, omitting these questions as fast as the improvement of the pupils will allow. But the exercise must be suited to the capacity of those addressed, or it will be useless, worse than useless. For otherwise its tendency will be to form and strengthen, not to destroy, the dreamy habit of listlessness. At the close of this exercise, the pupils should, by turns, be required to give a full and minute recapitulation of what they have heard.

As yet, I have spoken only of the power of concentration as applied to reading and hearing, an important part of education, but far from being the whole. Reading, hearing, and observation furnish the *mate-*

*trials* of knowledge, but the building must be erected by the man's own labor. A good memory, however well stocked, will never make a complete, a true man. The judgment must be exercised ; the thinking powers must be brought into action. He must not be a mere *passive recipient* of knowledge, a mere *retailer* of the opinions and arguments of others. To fit him for the high station of an American freeman, one of the sovereigns of this great community, he must be raised above the arts of the demagogue, he must learn to stand alone, to walk without leading-strings, to think *for himself* on all occasions. And that this may be effectually done, his reasoning faculties must be exercised at the very outset of education. We must not wait for the academy or the college to awaken his judgment. To a large portion of our population these institutions stand with closed doors ; and even though they were open to all, they come at too late a period. The work must be commenced while the mind is pliant and flexible, or it *never can* be properly done. The child must learn to "prove all things" from the first moment he begins to receive them. The questions of the teacher, even to the youngest child, must not merely be, What did the book say, or what did I tell you ?—What do you *think* of it ? What is *your opinion* of this, or that ? must be asked quite as frequently, if we mean to secure independence of mind. And not only so ; but *Why* do you think so ? must be a question that immediately follows. The little monosyllable, *why*, must always follow the *what*. A series of reading school books has lately issued from the press, designed

to aid in this great attempt to develop the thinking powers at the earliest possible period. The questions are exceedingly simple, as they ought to be for the young child. But none can be answered by the memory. The reason must be active.

Some persons may perhaps imagine that the reasoning powers of youth may be developed by the study of arithmetic, and still more by that of algebra and geometry. And no doubt they might, in some degree, if these studies were properly pursued ; that is to say, if pupils were required to invent rules and demonstrate problems from simple given principles. But this, unfortunately, is far from being the case. In our very best schools, the pupils do nothing more in geometry than repeat the reasonings of another mind ; and too many teachers require nothing more, in arithmetic and algebra, than a barren recitation of rules, and a mechanical working out of problems. No. Something very different from this is necessary. Simply to repeat the reasonings of others, differs little if at all from an effort of memory. The call now is for independence of thought,—for men who can, and who will sift and examine every sentiment before they receive it. To secure such a power, however, our youth must be accustomed, not merely to tell what they themselves think, but *why* they do so ; to render a good reason for the faith that is in them. The interrogatives what, how, and why, must be continually in the mouth of the teacher. But such a system cannot be carried out if commenced at a late period. It must commence in early life, in connection with the most simple subjects, and it must be pursued

so steadily as to form fixed *habits* of examination and of reasoning.

Exercise, then, of the faculties with which God has endowed us,—regular, systematic, stedfast exercise—exercise unceasingly persevered in from early youth, and increasing in intensity with increasing strength: this is the true secret of a sound education; this is the only regimen under which the mind can grow. And what can be more simple than the process? Is it not by such a method that every thing of real value is to be secured? It is not by momentary, spasmodic leaps, but by persevering effort alone, that any thing worth having is to be attained.

I have said, that the true office of the teacher was not so much to implant new principles in the human mind, as to develop and strengthen by regular, judicious exercise, those which had already been placed there by the Creator. And this remark ought not to be confined to intellectual education. It applies with equal force to the cultivation of the moral powers, more especially to that greatest and noblest moral power, the vicegerent of God within the soul of man, the glory and crown of his existence—the Conscience. Who can for a moment doubt that a regular exercise of this faculty would conduce equally to its sensitiveness and to its vigor? But here we commit precisely the same blunder noticed in speaking of other parts of our education. We neglect its cultivation till too late a period of life. We allow this part of our nature to sleep, until it has become so encrusted with sloth, so petrified, as it were, as to have ceased either to warn or reprove; we wait until our appetites, passions and

prejudices have attained their full growth,—till evil customs have settled down into inveterate habits, have become as it were a part of our very nature. Who ever thinks of asking a *young* child, Is it right or wrong to do so or so? And yet this is the very question which should be of hourly occurrence. For it gives a healthy employment both to our intellectual and moral nature. To think on such subjects is not only the sure method of developing the conscience, but it invigorates also the intellectual powers of attention, reflection, deliberation, comparison and judgment. And such, also, are precisely the topics with which the infant mind delights to grapple. If you ask a child of fourteen or sixteen years of age, whether such or such an action be right or wrong; if he has not been previously exercised with such questions he will hesitate, he will doubt, he will consider what influences you may draw from his answer. But the reply of the child of six or seven, on the contrary, will be prompt and decided. His eyes will sparkle, his whole countenance glow. A correct answer will be at once returned, if he only understand the terms of your question. And now let me ask, whether it be not of immense importance that all children should be trained from earliest infancy to such exercises, should acquire a habit of looking at every thing in a moral point of view; should be familiarized to such questions, till they would rise unconsciously, unbidden in the mind; till the prominent idea of youth becomes not, as now, Is it agreeable, is it pleasant? but, Is it right, or wrong, just or unjust?

One great difficulty in the way of proper moral

training arises from a serious defect both in our parental teaching and in our school books. I allude to the custom of presenting improper motives of action to the child, an error which he quickly detects, and thus is led to view all future moral teaching with an eye of suspicion. For we not only refrain from cultivating the conscience, but we actually pervert the moral nature of youth, by holding out gross, *sensual* inducements to virtue. Yes. Our children are absolutely taught to consider the momentary gratification of a distempered appetite as their supreme good. Such wretched trash as cakes, fruit, toys, prints, are held out as the reward, the *natural* reward of virtue, kindness, love; while deprivations, pains, even the common accidents of life are dragged in as the chastisements of vice. Does this accord with the plan of Providence? *Is* it with outward objects that piety, self-denial, and self-sacrifice are rewarded? *Has* a virtuous course any connection either with prosperity or adversity? If not, why should we teach our children so? Why should we instil into them the idea, that what is called success in life depends on virtue? Will such sordid notions lead to any thing but disappointment, skepticism, or murmurings against Providence?

In order that you may the more distinctly perceive how universally prevalent such false notions are, let us imagine that our secretary was *now* about to read to us an article entitled *Virtue Rewarded*. Now tell me, would you not imagine the hero of the tale was to receive something tangible?—some outward gratification, honor, dignity, or wealth? Would the calm

and constant sunshine of the soul which illumines the breast of the good man; would the delight which God has unalterably connected with the performance of duty, be suggested to your mind by this title; or would it be some extraneous indulgence, some adventitious sensual gratification? With respect to school books, a single example will make my meaning plain. Hundreds of others might be offered. In one of our most popular collections there is a story of a wicked boy named Jack, trying to persuade Harry, his companion, to break into an orchard. Harry refuses, and leaves him; and, on his return, finds the wall has fallen on wicked Jack, and broken his leg. The owner of the orchard, who had heard all that passed between the boys, rewards Harry with a hat-full of apples for his honesty. He shows the fruit to his mother, and assures her that he is *now* convinced that children are always happiest when they do right. Now this story, you observe, like most of those we meet with in school books, would answer an excellent purpose, if outward success were always accorded in this life to good actions, and failure and punishment to evil deeds. But we know that this is not the case. The very same day Harry *might* meet with a good child in real life overtaken by misfortunes, a wicked one triumphantly successful. A similar course of reasoning would lead him to the conclusion, that "children are always happiest when they do wrong;" or his ideas of right and wrong would be so perplexed and confounded, that he would probably raise his hands and exclaim, like many children of a larger growth, O, what a mysterious Providence! But the

fact is, the only mystery lies in our false teaching. God *never* promised to virtue either outward success, or immunity from accidents, and we wrong our children exceedingly when we teach them any such doctrine. Its genuine fruits are misanthropy and skepticism. It is what is commonly called *poetical* justice, which entirely differs from *moral* justice, being neither connected with truth nor with nature.

These defects have been carefully obviated in the reading-books already noticed. Their moral doctrines are founded on entirely different principles. The series is gradually progressive, from the first short sentences for infancy, to reading suitable for children from twelve to fourteen years of age.\* In these, the great aim, the moral improvement of the child, has never for a moment been lost sight of. Every lesson is accompanied by questions arising naturally out of the subject, addressed directly to the conscience of the child, thus keeping it constantly in exercise. The morality of these books is placed on its true basis, Duty ; on the Right, the Just, the True. Is it right or wrong ? Is it just or unjust ? Is it true or false ? These are the questions the child is continually called on to answer, and that from his own mind, without prompting either from book or teacher. Each series of questions is wound up with a precept from the Bible, bearing on the subject at issue, which

---

\* The books referred to, are published by William D. Ticknor and Co., Boston. They are entitled, "The Moral Instructor ; or Culture of the Heart, Affections, and Intellect, while learning to read."

those teachers who have used the books say is never at variance with the answer of the child. How, indeed, should they differ? Both proceed from the same great Author. To use the words of the apostle, the children show the work of the law written in their hearts.

In such a plan of teaching, the omnipresence of God may be used as a powerful incentive to virtue. God should not be represented, as is too common, as seated at a distance, above the sky, occasionally looking down upon us from his lofty throne. No! He should be shown to be every where present: in the house, in the field, in the play-ground, in the school; to be, in fact, the Being "who fills existence with himself alone." The idea, "could the child have acted so, had he remembered this,"—should be one of perpetual occurrence. And again; "How delightful for the good to know this! What a dreadful thought for the wicked! But could any one be wicked, who constantly recollects this?"—Now what would be the effect on the rising generation, could every child in school be imbued with this great truth? And how easily might this be done!

Unfortunately for our youth, this deficiency of moral training is not the only disadvantage to which they are subjected in early youth. For, were this all, each parent might remedy the evil, at least so far as his own child was concerned. But not only is the conscience allowed to sleep, while appetites, prejudices and passions are gaining hourly strength: our children are absolutely placed in a school of vice, where every tendency is to evil. I know that such

an expression will to most of you seem harsh and exaggerated. But allow me to ask, whether the social and moral condition of our schools be of a Christian or of a heathen character ? I speak of schools of all kinds ; of the district school, the select school, the academy, the college ; for in this respect, I fear, the difference is exceedingly trifling. Do children, in their intercourse with each other, display the best or the worst qualities of our nature ? Do boys especially treat each other with equity, honor, moderation, and kindness ? Is their society one of mutual justice and equal law ? or is it one in which gentleness is despised, innocence derided, order scouted at and authority assailed.

There is one important consideration which we are too apt to lose sight of in moral education, viz., the universal tendency of mankind to *follow the multitude*, whether it be to good or to evil ; or, to express it more strongly, though by no means too strongly, it is the overwhelming force of public opinion upon public morals. We may not have perceived it, but it is nevertheless a fact, that public opinion, that is, the manner of thinking and acting of the majority among their companions, is quite as powerful among young children as among grown people. The youngest sympathizes with his mates, and has a strong desire for their sympathy in return. Now, in the present state of things, all our individual efforts are *counteracted* by this important principle. In the uncultivated state of the conscience which now universally exists, the multitude rarely lead to good, almost always to evil. The utmost care of the most anxious

parent is now rendered abortive by the all-powerful example of schoolmates and acquaintances. Let a child *now* speak of right and wrong among his associates, and he would absolutely be hooted at, he would become a laughing-stock in the play-ground. But introduce a system of moral culture, such as has been described, into the schools generally; let *all* children be trained from infancy to look at every thing in a moral point of view; let the question, "Is this right or wrong?" be one which they hear twenty times a day, one which they themselves are daily accustomed to answer, and *then*, would not the operation of this principle in man (call it imitation, fashion, or what you will), would it not frequently be the *reverse* of what it is now? Would not the multitude frequently be followed to *good* instead of to *evil*. Let *ANY ONE* *then* ask such a question, and instead of, as now, exciting amazement or ridicule, would not a ready, a universal, a true response spontaneously arise in every mind? The conscience having been *habitually* exercised on this subject, would it not always be ready with its answer?

Before closing, a brief recapitulation of the topics passed under review may not be unprofitable.

First, I spoke of the want of the power of concentration while reading; the power of fixing the attention on the book with which we may be engaged, to the entire exclusion of every foreign idea. This defect completely cuts off the means of self-culture, the most valuable part of education, from the great mass of our people; renders the reading of the Bible, even in

the hands of the most anxious and pious, a mere form; and seals up that literature, the common birth-right of all, which should be equally accessible to all, opening it but partially even to the favored few. At what a vast expense are our community taught the art of reading! Who can estimate it? And yet how *few*, how very few, *can* apply it to a useful practical purpose! How few can use it for mental improvement! How few are engaged in self-education, which ought, and which can so easily be made the employment of all!

Secondly, I noticed the want of power in our community to listen with attention, and pointed out a few of the serious evils arising from that defect, in public as well as in private life. I noticed the incapacity of jurors and witnesses of eliciting truth; the misunderstandings and bickerings in society, traceable to the habitual practice with which all are infected, or hearing a little and guessing the rest. And, more particularly, I showed how completely this defect nullifies the greater part of our religious instruction, prepared for the people at such an expense of property, time and labor, and to which so large a body of the most talented men in our country have devoted their lives.

Thirdly, I spoke of the total want of cultivation of the reasoning powers of youth, and showed how necessary it was that they should be developed in every child, to fit him for the common every-day duties of life. I mentioned particularly our religious and political duties, subjects on which we are not

merely called to *think* correctly, but actually to *act*, *out* these thoughts. I showed how often and how completely we delude ourselves with the notion that we have formed opinions of our own, on these and other equally important topics, when, in fact, our minds only reflect the image presented to us by others. This naturally leads to the inquiry, how many of the actual sovereigns of this great nation, the people, are really capable of forming a correct judgment, *any* judgment of their own, on these exciting, controverted topics, on which they are *annually at least* called on to *act*? How many, let me now ask, can hold in review, as it were, a series of facts and opinions, can steadily contemplate them till they are arranged, assorted and compared, weighed in the balance, and a judgment is formed accordingly? How many *ever think* of examining more than one side of a question; nay, may I not add, how many are *capable* of looking at more than one side. In fact, is it not a lamentable truth, that our community generally act as if they believed there *was* but one side to every question, and that all who do not think with them are either knaves or fools? Gentlemen, shall such a state of things continue? Shall we rest satisfied with such education as this for our community, an education which stuffs the memory with facts and dates to repletion, but which leaves the divine faculties of the soul almost wholly undeveloped; an education, which leaves our people to *act* on the most important subjects with limited, one-sided views, which in a manner forces them to take all their opin-

ions at second-hand ? Shall we calmly fold our hands, and say, This is no busines of mine ! I take no interest in such matters ! Surely this would be but a wretched policy. Surely this is a subject in which *every* man ought to take the deepest interest. For it is a concern in which all have a stake.

Fourthly, I spoke of Moral Education, now entirely a blank in our schools, and showed how easily it might be founded on the full development of the conscience by simple questions as to right and wrong, aided and enforced by the precepts of the Bible:

And now, Gentlemen, recurs the important question with which I set out. Are these points that have been noticed, or are they not, *essential, indispensable* conditions of a sound education ? Does any thing less than this, any thing into which these elements do not enter, deserve the name of education ? Is it at all suited for the sovereigns *de facto* of this great nation, for men who practically decide at the polls, for what purpose and in what manner the powers of government shall be wielded ? If children were to acquire such a power as has been described, over their attention while reading and listening ; if their reasoning faculties were also developed, so that they could compare and judge for themselves, would they not thereby completely acquire the power of self-education, and in all probability push forward in a career of never-ending mental improvement ; and if, at the same time, the conscience were fully developed, rendered sensitive and active by constant exercise, would not such a training as this form a substantial foundation for a glorious community of freemen ?

I am fully aware, that the mass of our community are perfectly contented with the school as it is, and in fact solace themselves with the idea that the intelligence and sterling worth of New England are chiefly derived from scholastic instruction. This notion I have elsewhere \* refuted. Suffice it now to say, that of two brothers from a respectable, intelligent family, reared exactly alike, except that one had all the advantages of our best district schools, while the other never entered the school, never learned even the names of the letters,—of these two brothers, I say, it would be difficult, if not impossible to tell, from their general deportment and conversation, which of the two was the scholar. What! does the smattering of arithmetic, geography and grammar, nineteenths of which is generally forgotten in a few years; does such meagre culture as this, *can* it, indeed, produce such fruits? No, indeed. The general intelligence and moral worth of our youth are more the effect of traditional than of direct instruction. The conversation and example of parents and associates, the works of nature and of art, both great and small, that lie around, furnish most of the knowledge of the child. The heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, the farm, the mill, the factory, the store, the shop of the mechanic, the study of the artist, all furnish valuable ideas. And, as was beautifully shown us yesterday,† the professions shed a brilliant light

---

\* In the Teacher's Manual.

† In Professor Shed's Lecture.

over the whole frame of society. The caucus, also the town meeting, the district-school meeting, the court-room and the justice's office, store the mind with political knowledge, and with the great principles of right and wrong. The united force of PUBLIC OPINION, aided in some cases by the exercises of the Sabbath, moulds the moral nature. No, no. Place one of our district schools in a wild spot in Ireland, or in Russia, and let every child there receive all the instruction that it generally confers here, and you would quickly see the inefficiency of such training. The difference between that spot and the neighboring districts would be scarcely perceptible. The kind of reading taught at school, which confers little or no command over our literature,—this, with the trifling modicum of arithmetic, grammar and geography, if deprived of all the other aids derived from the peculiar state of our society, would do little or nothing towards the development of their great powers, would fail to produce a community like that of New England in ten generations.

If, then, the school, which now effects so little, might so easily be made to produce such great results, might lay open the whole cyclopædia of science and literature to our youth, might not only so train their reasoning powers as to fit them for the important station they hold as a beacon light for a world enveloped in darkness and misery, and in addition might cultivate amongst them the virtues of conscientiousness, truthfulness, obedience, self-denial, veneration and love,—ought we not to take hold in good earnest, to

bring about a solid reform, by determining what really are the *essentials of a sound education*, and uniting all our energies to fix them firmly in our system? If my feeble efforts shall in any way assist in this important work, my labors in the cause will have met with an abundant reward.

## LECTURE V.

---

### THE CLAIMS OF NATURAL HISTORY AS A BRANCH OF COMMON SCHOOL EDUCATION.

---

BY WILLIAM O. AYERS,  
PRINCIPAL OF THE ELIOT GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BOSTON.

---

God has placed us in a material world, and has made our relations to it so varied and so intimate as to end but with our lives. From the first dawn of our existence till we moulder back to dust, these objects of nature minister to our luxury, our comfort, and even our life. Our breath, our food, our motion and our rest, our clothing, our amusements, our houses, our vehicles and our travelling, our commerce and our sources of wealth, all depend upon them. Does it not, therefore, appear strange and unreasonable that even now, when the diffusion of knowledge is so general, and in a land which boasts, and with reason too, its unrivalled schools and school systems, it should be necessary to plead that our children may be allowed to learn their connection with this world, this glorious world around us; that instead of being confined to the rules and definitions of grammar,

arithmetic, &c., they may be allowed to open their eyes and see, to open their hearts and feel the beauties in the midst of which they live? But that such a necessity exists, is to many minds apparent. Go into any of our schools, and ascertain what branches are studied and the amount of time devoted to each, examine the rules and instructions of school committees, and find what books are ordered or allowed; go into the bookstores, and inquire for works on Natural History suited to the capacities of your children, and then for grammars or geographies, and discover that while of these latter you will be shown the productions of ten to twenty different authors, all of them good, though differing in excellence; of the former the stock in trade consists of one or at most two works, abounding in errors. Take up a book, issued within the last few weeks, purporting to be a Class Book of Zoölogy for schools, and see the crabs and lobsters classed as insects, and then consider if it is not time that an attempt were made to introduce into our schools the study of Natural History in a form at once accurate and attractive. Let me not be understood to say that arithmetic, geography, grammar are unworthy of the attention which they so generally receive. Far from it; they must continue to be, as they ever have been, the basis of all sound education, and without them our labors in other branches must be vain. All that I ask is, that Natural History shall receive at the hands of teachers, and all interested in education, that proportion of study and care which its intrinsic merits demand. We seek not that any preëminence shall be granted, that this study shall be

pursued to the exclusion of any of those which have so long held sway. That were unjust; but is it unjust to claim for an important branch of knowledge, that it should not remain in total neglect? But a few years since, the study of Natural History in schools was almost impracticable. Burthened with the load of errors which had descended from the times of Aristotle and Pliny, and which actual observation has scarcely attempted to remove, it would have been extreme folly to require a child to fill his memory with a mass of that which the slightest watchfulness must show him was totally incorrect. But this excuse can no longer exist. Instead of subjecting its votaries to the charge of insanity or of dealing with evil spirits; instead of bringing on their heads the thunders of the church and the ridicule of men of learning, Natural History stands now in closer proximity to that proud elevation on which the dignity of its subjects and its objects must eventually place it. Men whose intellect and acquirements make them the glory of their age, who stand in the foremost ranks of those well known to fame, are not ashamed to devote the undivided energies of life to its pursuits. They climb the snows of the Upper Alps, to watch how

“ The glacier’s cold and restless mass  
Moves onward day by day;”

they brave the burning sands and deadly blasts of Africa, to learn with what unsparing hand nature has poured the stores of animal and vegetable life along the banks of the Joliba or Gaboon; with the

hardy fisherman they mount the ocean wave, and catch the treasures hid from unenlightened eyes, or go down with the miner to his gloomy home, and by the lamp's glimmering and uncertain light they learn with what beautiful precision long ages ago rocks on rocks were piled, and in the earth's vast storehouse the coal was laid without measure for the use of man, who as yet had no existence; they penetrate the most dismal and dangerous localities, they visit regions the most remote, they climb the mountain, they traverse the plain; or, in a more quiet and unpretending manner, they seek, in the more immediate vicinity of the peaceful home, that knowledge whose sources are so abundant and which so readily comes to those who ask its blessings. Men of years and of learning can watch with pleasure and profit the motion of a little worm, and gather from it a lesson whose full importance and value human intellect has yet failed to trace. Men too, of high and noble birth, whose pride has been that they are sprung from ancestors of great renown, and who but recently would have counted it unworthy of their lofty lineage to enter into any competition with the "common herd," are now fain to leave the pedestal on which they so fondly imagined themselves placed, and enrol their names as lovers and cultivators of natural science. Kings have not disdained to bestow the honors of rank on naturalists, to equip and send to distant regions the most costly expeditions, while at home they maintain at great expense and with much pride gardens and museums, storing them with objects rare and beautiful, that even among the unlettered throng a taste and love for the study of nature

may be fostered. Our own state governments, planted where, two hundred years ago, the forests of ages waved their majestic growth, and the red man drove the timid deer, have not been backward in this noble work. One after another, in rapid succession, have they given to learned men commissions to explore and make known the treasures buried in the earth or raised above its surface, and already do the able reports of those commissioners enable us to appreciate in some degree the vast resources of our most wonderful country. In a neighboring state, the munificence of a single individual has founded a scientific school in connection with our most ancient university and endowed it with professorships, which are filled by men of the highest renown.

But while Natural History has thus advanced, and is now admitted to be a department of knowledge second in importance to none, its claim to be taught in our common schools has not been practically allowed. It is not perhaps in any case forbidden, but it is treated with neglect. School committees do not make it a part of their requisitions, their quarterly examinations have no reference to it; teachers do not include it among the items of preparation for their important work. Even the books which are in some cases allowed—for I have no knowledge of any instances in which it is *required*—are those published long since, and of course at present entirely behind the advanced condition of this science. Who would be content, at the present day, to teach grammar, or geography, or arithmetic, from the works which were in common use twenty, fifteen,

or ten years ago? What teacher would not feel that he was going backward at a lamentable rate to adopt as his text-books Murray's Grammar or Cummings's Geography; and yet in Natural History this is but a fair representation of the course assumed. To no place in our country can we look with greater confidence for tokens of advancement in the cause of common school education than to Boston. For two hundred years her schools have been the pride of her citizens, and the sums annually lavished upon them have yielded a return of which she well may boast, and whose influence has been felt throughout the globe. But even in the Boston schools Natural History is a thing almost unknown. In the Regulations of the School Committee is given a list of works which *may* be studied, though they are expected not to interfere with those which are required. One of these works is Smellie's Philosophy of Natural History. It is a work of much value, though not brought down to the condition of our present knowledge, and having few of its illustrations drawn from American sources; but even this, so far as I am aware, is studied in very few schools. In the quarterly reports of the Committees, I have never heard the subject mentioned, and the inference is unquestionable, that it is not deemed of sufficient importance to merit attention. Is it strange, therefore, that I have chosen to bring before you on the present occasion the claims of Natural History as a branch of common school education? Where could I have a more fitting field, where could I raise my voice with the hope of producing an effect more widely felt? Around me are gathered those,

who are exerting and who will exert no inconsiderable influence on the future destinies of our country. To us are entrusted many of those who will hold important stations in religion, in statesmanship, and in power. Their future character must be in part what we shall make it. And we have come from widely distant portions of the land to encourage each other in our arduous labors, to profit by each other's experience, and to consult in what manner we may most perfectly accomplish the task of preparing children for usefulness and happiness through life, and for glory in the world beyond the grave. To you, then, I appeal, confident of a ready sympathy and a candid hearing. At your hands I ask that justice shall be done to our children, by opening to them the portals of the fair garden of nature, and leading them through its flowery paths.

It may not be amiss to consider the claims of Natural History under three aspects,—its effects on the individuals engaged in its study—the benefits which accrue from it to society—and the natural obligation to learn all in our power as to the works of our Creator. The last is of course peculiar to this branch of study; in the two former it may be compared, and we have no reason to fear the comparison, with the studies commonly pursued. Its effects on the individual are two—pleasure and profit; and the advantage of uniting these we well understand. While we should never think of permitting a child to consume his time on a subject from which no possible advantage could ever be derived, simply because it pleased his childish fancy, we should also be slow to compel

him to learn that which our matured judgment pronounced advantageous to his future interests, but which could in no way be rendered pleasant in its acquisition. We might indeed do this in some instances, but our daily experience shows us how much better it is to lead than to drive, in imparting knowledge. Our daily task is to smooth the path and render it delightful, and while we neglect nothing of real value and solid worth, to show the flowers and beauties which every where abound. When the soul of the pupil is in the work, and he longs for the hour to come when he may commence his studying, or, better still, for the hour of recitation, well may the teacher feel that half his burden is removed; knowledge to such a mind is like the gentle rain to the earth parched by the scorching sun—ever welcome, ever rapidly absorbed, ever producing abundant fruit. And where, in the whole range of studies, can you find any thing calculated to fill the heart with delight, to engage the attention, to interest and employ every faculty, like Natural History? To whatever branch of it, to whatever portion of its wide field we turn our eyes, unbounded wonders rise before us. The air, the earth, the waters, swarm with life in myriad forms, some impressing us with awe from their grandeur, their terrible power—some filling our souls with beauty from their brilliant colors, their harmonious proportions or their graceful motions—and some challenging our admiration from their very minuteness, which yet implies no lack of absolute perfection. To the student of Nature a thousand sources of delight are opened, which must remain forever closed to those

who lack the taste and knowledge to enjoy the works of God. In city or country, at home or abroad, alone or in company, we cannot leave this fountain of happiness, whose waters are ever fresh, and which grow sweeter and sweeter to the taste the better their qualities are known. How often do the inhabitants of our great cities fly to the country to avoid the heat of summer, and after a few dull weeks hurry back again to breathe the contaminated air of crowded avenues and assemblies, because the country is so lonesome, so dismal, the hours hang so heavily on their hands ! How often, amid the charming ocean life of Cape May, Rockaway, or Newport, the loveliness of Winnipiseogee, or the grandeur of the White Mountains, the game and the dance are called in to pass away, or, as it is impiously termed, to kill the time ! Poor mortals ! well may we afford to pity them ; well may we wonder at their blindness. Where can the naturalist be lonely, where will the time drag slowly and wearily along ? Is he on the sea—its bosom bears a thousand things, as yet unseen, unknown. Within its rolling billows float those wondrous little beings whose collected light oft makes the ocean glow like fire, whose history is still unwritten, and whose very nature scarce is known. Each bed of seaweed drifting on the watery waste, bears with it in its wandering course from zone to zone, a thousand objects, living and inanimate, all worthy of the closest scrutiny. The timorous flying-fish, as it bounds into the air and sinks again beneath the wave, gives rise to the inquiry, by what power is its long flight sustained ? The hungry dolphin and the ravenous shark, the

strong-winged albatross, and roving petrel, as they gather around his ship, give him full proof that God is good, and that his tender mercies are over his works; that he who formed them provided for their wants, and gave them powers adequate to their own support and happiness.

Is he on the land, beneath "those grand old woods," which have swung their arms to the blasts of centuries, or climbing the mountain's side, or loitering by the gentle rivulet, to what object can he turn his eyes, which does not teem with instruction and enjoyment? What bird skims along the field, or soars aloft above the forests and the hills; what fish swims the stream; what insect clings to the grass, or flutters by night around him, from which he may not communicate instruction to his fellow-men, with satisfaction and profit!

Is he even within the over-peopled city, surrounded by thousands whose whole hearts are set to worship Mammon, and whom no love of Nature ever can arouse—for the better life within has long been stifled and destroyed—yet even here he need not falter in his work, or be discouraged.

None of our American cities are destitute of trees, and some small show of rural life; and here his hand and head can find much work to do. Still further, were he deprived of this, were he confined to his own dwelling, had he no kind friend to bring him a single specimen of those things which would gladden his soul, there is yet a field before him which a lifetime would fail to exhaust. The numberless insects which he so easily may obtain within even that limited space, will give him food for all his thoughts, and

labor for all his time, till life shall end ; and then he will be ready to acknowledge that the work is but begun. This may seem like mere exaggeration to those who have never made the trial, but it is the language of the experience of every ardent naturalist. Let any man attempt to enumerate the species of plants within sight of his own dwelling, then add to them the insects which creep upon those plants or swarm about the lighted candle, then count the shells which live within the same space either on the land or in the water, the birds which fly about his home, the worms, the fishes, the reptiles and the quadrupeds, and he will give up the task in despair, or become a naturalist perforce—or more probably he will become a naturalist from choice.

Here is one great source of the enjoyment to be derived from the study of Natural History—the exalted ideas which it conveys to us of the power of God. We believe that all things were created by the breath of his mouth, and the belief fills us with reverence. But how much is that reverence deepened, when we ascertain that nothing which came from His hand is imperfect—that all is worthy of its great original ; that the same skill which balanced the planets in their orbits, did not despise the tiny insect, but polished the joints of his antennæ so finely, that with our most searching microscopes we can find in them no fault ; that man, with his perfect organization, is in no respect more completely adapted to his own sphere than the humble polyp to its own ; and that so multiplied, so infinitely varied are the works of our Almighty Father, that when, having advanced with

our unassisted vision till we are lost in wonder and admiration, we call to our aid the microscope, we find that it reveals to us a world of which we had never dreamed, and which is in many respects more wonderful than that which we had previously known. Well may we exclaim, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all ; the earth is full of thy riches."

But some will say, that though it is thus pleasant to study Natural History in the field and among the works of nature, yet teaching the first principles of it by book to children, is a very different thing ; and some even go so far as to say, that it is a dry study to introduce into schools, and one which will not interest the children. Did you ever try to interest a child by placing before him a dictionary of the French or Latin language, and requiring him to recite to you page after page of words or definitions without a single syllable of explanation or encouragement, and then wonder that he found it a dry study ? Yet such a course would be but what I have seen teachers do in professing to teach Botany. A text-book is put before the class, and a certain portion of it assigned for the lesson ; they are called to recite. "What is a calyx ; what is a carolla ; what are stamens ; what are pistils?"—follow in rapid succession. The children answer like machines, and with about as much real knowledge of the structure of plants, and return to their seats. They complain that botany is a dry study, and who can wonder ? Who thinks of teaching grammar or geography in such a manner, and who would not expect to find them dull and uninter-

esting if he did. But come before your class to teach them Natural History, as it should be taught; come with your head full and your heart full, ready to answer as well as to ask questions, and the experience of years deceives me, if you will not find interest enough, and if your only difficulty will not be to check it and prevent its taking time from other studies. You will find the dull ones brighten up, and show an engagedness about their lessons, if they never showed it before. How many times have I seen the happy faces gathered round me, with every ear ready to catch the slightest syllable of explanation; how many times, after months of progress, have I found, that facts stated only incidentally long before, perhaps in answer to some question from one of their own number, were as fresh in their memories as on the day when they were announced; how often has it been difficult to bring a recitation to a close at the appointed time, so many hands were raised, so many questions yet to come! You may say, that Natural History is an uninteresting study; but if you wish your assertion supported, do not ask the children.

It is not, however, because the study is pleasant, that we present it as having claims to our attention; that is a recommendation of comparatively small value. It is profitable, both to the mind and to the body—both to the individual and to society. The first point which we will notice, is the expansion of mind which must result from its faithful cultivation. We may assume, that the acquisition of knowledge in any form expands and ennobles the mind, excepting that knowledge of evil, whose direct tendency is

to degradation, and of course in that respect this science can be inferior to none. Whatever we can claim for the other branches taught in school, we can certainly claim with undiminished force for this. But our demand ends not here. There is, in the objects embraced by this study, and the principles included in it and connected with it, a dignity, an elevation, to which no other branch has any pretensions. And must not this dignity, this loftiness of subject, react upon the mind? Is it possible that your child can commune with noble thoughts and noble works, and never feel their influence? Why teach the scholar to read Greek, the proud language of poetry and song! Why urge upon him the study of the Iliad, or that he should read in their native tongue the glowing lines of Virgil! Why press these forward, till, in our high schools, our academies and colleges, the death of Hector, the grief of Andromache, the taking of Troy, the loves of Dido and *Æ*neas, are common as household words? Why, but that the belief is universal, that communion with the thoughts of the mighty minds of olden time must produce an influence elevating and dignifying. Why do we send our artists to study among the works of art in Italy, but as another illustration of the same great truth? Applying it then, to the case before us, where shall we find any branch of knowledge which can come into comparison with this? We do not study the works of man in which we find constant imperfections, and whose full relations and value we can very speedily trace; we study the works of Him, "whose ways are unsearchable, and whose works past finding out."

We follow the instructions of Him, who "teacheth as never man taught." Will you set before your child the works of man, and incite him to copy such perfection? Will you exhort him to fill his mind with the images of beauty displayed by Titian, Raphael, or Angelo, or to muse on the brilliant pictures of imagery drawn with the immortal pen by the great poets and master spirits of all time, and then forbid him to hold communion, through his works, with Him in whose hand are the spirits of all flesh? You wish his taste elevated, his genius fostered, his powers expanded, his whole inner nature wrought to a higher state,—where will you find a better book than that which lies open before him, and on every leaf of which are inscribed the words of wisdom? If you live in a country like this, go take him to the summits of your lofty mountains, and as the lovely landscape lies before him, teach him to drink in the inspiration of the scene. Then, from your elevated seat, while as on a picture beneath you are shown the works of ages past, let him see how rivers have left their ancient beds and cut new channels through the plain, how rocks have been rent asunder and their disjointed fragments heaved in wild disorder; how lakes have disappeared, and in their stead are now the waving fields of grain; how the mountain streams are wearing the solid rocks, and slowly, but surely, conveying them to form new lands below,—and let him see that in it all the hand of God is working; that it is part of his grand, majestic plan, that these powers of nature, these agents of his will, should do the work in which they are engaged; that it is no

blind chance which placed a river here, a mountain there, which lodged the granite, the slate, and the limestone in their relative positions, and which gave to the limpid water and the invisible air the power to waste the hardest rock. Can he gaze on scenes like these, and listen to instruction like this, and his mind not receive an impression at least as favorable and exalting as from exercise in arithmetic or any kindred branch?

But it may be said, that this is not a fair representation; that the lesson can very seldom be taken in such circumstances; and that in the school-room we can have none of the accessories here mentioned for producing an effect. This is undoubtedly true, but does not in the least affect our position; it is only removing some of the external appliances. The pupil must commit to memory a portion of his text-book, and so far as a trial of memory is concerned, no other branch has superior claims, and perhaps in some respects none can equal it; the hard names about which so much is said, and which are sometimes pronounced beyond the ability of children to learn or to retain, are certainly equal as a test to most things which we require of them. But it is not merely as a trial of memory that we are to value this study, or that we are to appreciate it as an exercise in school hours. Why cannot a precise and extended knowledge be acquired with a facility certainly as great as that afforded to the study of geography? We place before a child maps and descriptions, and from them we expect him to obtain all the ideas which he will ever receive in respect to very far the largest portions of

the globe. To assure himself that London is situated on the Thames, he need not cross the Atlantic and visit the spot in person, or sail to Iceland to feel convinced that a volcano is a burning mountain. His book tells him, and he believes it ; his maps and illustrations show him, and he understands it in part ; his teacher explains, and his understanding of it is as complete and thorough, in all probability, as it will ever become. Shall we therefore reject geography from our schools, or teach only that very limited portion which may be expected to come within the pupil's daily experience ? Yet equally wise is the counsel of those who would cast aside Natural History because the whole field, with its infinite extent, which no human mind could ever receive, cannot pass before a school-boy's gaze, or because that school-boy will not of necessity continue to study after leaving school till he becomes a learned naturalist. We do not reason in this manner in regard to any other branch, and why should we do it here ?

But are not the advantages in studying Natural History vastly greater than in studying geography ? In many departments of the science, prepared specimens, which any teacher can secure with a little trouble and no expense, which can be carried to the school-room and kept there months and years without injury, will answer every purpose of explanation. It needs not costly apparatus. In conchology, the beautiful shells which grace our cabinets are no better than the brown and homely snail which you may find by the road-side, or the clams and mussels, some species of which abound in every water, salt or fresh.

They are, in fact, much less useful; for, if a specimen is used in explanation, which the pupil can himself obtain by searching, a new interest is given to the pursuit, and an impression is made by it which time can never remove. But without specimens we have an advantage over the branch already mentioned. We place before the child descriptions and figures; he commits it as he would another lesson, and his comprehension of it is probably as good; his teacher's explanation gives him further aid, and he goes out with his mind ready to receive all additional knowledge. On his way home, perhaps, he sees the very plant, or bird, or rock, or shell which has formed the subject of his lesson; he sees it with an interest he never felt before, his mind is at work, he has a story to tell at home or to the first playmate he may meet; the work is done, that lesson will never be forgotten. And so it will advance. The new world is opening before him. What he learns in school he sees exemplified in the market, in the streets, in the fields, in the streams; a new source of happiness, of pure enjoyment, is opened to him, and through life it will never be closed but by his own neglect.

We come then to another point in which this study is of positive benefit to the pupil. It causes, from its nature, constant habits of observation, the source of all knowledge. The amount of actual knowledge which we impart during the school life of a child, even under the most favorable circumstances, is of course but small. We lay the foundation, the superstructure he himself must rear in the years of after life. Our aim must be to see that the foundation is

complete and perfect, that it is able to support whatever he may build upon it, and that he has a thorough knowledge of those implements and materials which he is to use in building. But of what avail are all these without the determination to build, and those habits which will enable him to carry that determination into effect? A constant and very important portion, therefore, of our duty is to endeavor to form and to cherish in the minds of children those habits by which knowledge is acquired, retained, arranged and rendered useful. Foremost among these stands the habit of observation. By reading, from lectures, from conversation, we gather the ideas which other men have acquired, and constant use must be made of these agencies, but by them we gain nothing which has not been already known. By observation we draw to the stores of our own minds, not the second-hand offerings of others, but the fresh materials of mental culture, and those materials we can in our turn pour forth to make positive additions to the sum of human knowledge. And surely no study can do more to favor the acquisition of this habit of observation than that one whose entire success depends upon its cultivation. The delight which the child experiences at looking out with the eyes of his understanding and soul, instead of mere bodily, organs tends to lead him to constant observation without an effort. The more he advances, the easier and more pleasant does the practice become, until at last the neglect of it would be an effort instead of its exercise, and he no longer goes through the world with his eyes closed, like so many of his companions, but every thing to

him is full of life and beauty. The field of his observation he can never fully explore; the more thoroughly he examines it, the more will he be impressed with its vastness and its grandeur. Each increase of knowledge is but an increase of happiness; and delights, not at the command of other men, are his constant reward.

And while its effects are thus beneficial to the mind, Natural History brings another claim to our favorable consideration, upon the ground of its physical results. The operation of other studies is to occupy the mind of the pupil at his desk in school, or in his seat at home, but to set before him no motive for action of body; in fact, their very pursuit neither requires nor encourages it. A child learns his lesson in grammar or arithmetic—he gets no new ideas in regard to it from working in the garden, from a stroll in the fields, or his walks in the country. He learns nothing new concerning the nominative case, or vulgar fractions, from climbing the mountain side while he breathes the pure mountain air. But all his knowledge of Natural History is to be acquired, to be confirmed, to be illustrated by habits such as these. The direct tendency of this study is to create such a love for its objects and its pursuits as to render a walk, a ride, an excursion in the country a pleasure, which it could never be before. And increasing thus the pleasure, the sources of that pleasure will of course be sought with greater avidity and with increased frequency. This is not asserted merely from theory, but from abundant instances of actual experiment. Within the last few years much has been done, and worthily done, to improve the physical education of

our children, to save their bodies from destruction while we cultivate their minds. The air of our school-houses has been rendered more pure by skilfully applying the principles of science to practical ventilation ; the seats have been so improved as to give their little limbs all the comfort which their confinement during school hours will allow ; the study of physiology has to a limited extent been introduced and has produced most excellent results.

But we have done nothing to place before them inducements to exercise both mind and body during their hours or their weeks of recess or vacation. We have not shown them, that while they study in school and learn a lesson perhaps at home, there is another lesson which they may study morning, noon and night ; a lesson which is no task or burden, which is studied in the field, on the way to school, by the river, in the forest, without a book, with a teacher or with none—a lesson whose every page is pleasure, and whose pursuit a pure well-spring of joy. Shall we neglect a branch of physical culture so important as this, and deprive our children thus of that which gives them health both of body and mind ? Either the position is incorrect, or such a course is inconsistent with our professions and our practice.

These are but a few of the advantages which may be easily shown to flow from the study of Natural History to those who are engaged in its pursuit ; but to mention more is unnecessary. The space which can be allotted to a single speaker on an occasion like the present is sufficient to allow nothing more than a glance at the prominent features of this ample subject.

We purpose, therefore, passing at once to the next topic, to allude to the benefits received by society from an increased diffusion of knowledge in regard to the world of nature. These have been in part anticipated. No benefit to the individual can accrue from an addition of information which is not felt in a degree more or less extensive by those with whom he comes in contact. Enlightened members must constitute enlightened society. But these are points in which a general good is gained, which can scarcely be traced to individual sources. In many respects we are wiser than our fathers were, and things which were to them of vast import and worthy of the most serious attention, have now become the school-boy's jest. The dreadful days of Salem witchcraft cannot return, for the standard of knowledge in society has been raised so far, that he who should relate stories like those once credited by the gravest and the wisest in the land, would but excite a smile of pity or contempt. It is not because books have been written or sermons preached, to show that belief in witchcraft is a delusion, but because knowledge has driven ignorance from the field, and the offspring of ignorance finds no place nor foothold. In the same manner Natural History will produce results arising from its general diffusion. One of these will be the removal of groundless fears. In all portions of the country and of the world, are found some objects which are hurtful to man; no kingdom of animal, vegetable, or mineral is without them. But the list of these is in all places greatly increased through ignorance; and perhaps in no part of the world is this more strikingly

true than in New England. Let us take as a single illustration the reptiles. What alarm is often caused by the appearance of a harmless little snake, because in warmer climates the poisonous serpents are abundant! How many are afraid of even the common toad or the little salamanders of our streams, and shrink with horror at the thought of touching them! But were the idea universally conveyed, that in all New England but two poisonous reptiles—the rattle-snake and the copperhead—are known, that even these two are confined to a few localities, and that wherever they occur their existence and their appearance are well understood, would not this source of discomfort be greatly diminished? Were all to understand that the toad, which catches flies about our gardens, though it wears no “precious jewel in its head,” is guiltless of all intent to harm, many uneasy thoughts and disturbed moments would be prevented. These may seem like trifles, but in the aggregate their amount is far from being inconsiderable, and the removal of such fears would be an object well worthy of attainment.

But not fears only would a diffused knowledge of this science prevent, but positive injury to property. The gain already from its direct application has been incalculable, even where the science is cultivated by so few; what then must it become when an acquaintance with Natural History shall be as common as the study of geography? when every farmer shall watch the transformations of the insects which destroy his fruits with enlightened eyes, prepared to comprehend their changes and to arrest their progress in future

years, at the most favorable stages? In regard to that portion of the insect world, from which so much injury is received, our knowledge has scarcely assumed a definite form. And what can be done when an entomologist, scattered here and there, is all the force which is brought to bear upon them; when those whose property is affected by their inroads, do nothing in their own behalf, and the labor is left entirely to those who work from pure love of the pursuit, and not from the urgings of self-interest. The agencies, whether insect or not, which destroy the pines on so many thousand acres of the barrens of our Southern States; which prevent the growth and development of our peaches and plums; which for several years have cut off the potatoes, and in some parts of the world have brought suffering and starvation; which kill the tops of the locust trees in a manner so very singular—who knows them and can define their limits and extent? With some of them we profess to be acquainted, but the acquaintance is limited to a bare description of their external form and some few of their changes, while the practical knowledge which can put an end to their ravages is yet to be attained. That this, however, would be attained, and that speedily, there can be no doubt, were the corps of observers increased as it must be, from the general introduction of Natural History as a study, and from its faithful pursuit in our schools. Scientific men in this country generally reside in the cities or large towns; few live in the wild regions of the forests or even in the retirement of the country, where the operations of insects can be traced in their daily pro-

gress, and only by such tracing and observation can we hope to be able to apply a remedy for the evil which they cause. It is plain, therefore, that an enlarged cultivation of the science affords us the only ground of hope in this respect. And while injury is thus prevented, positive and important advantages are gained by developing the resources of the country, and by giving a fair market-value to articles which, from unworthy prejudice or from ignorance, had been rejected and considered unsaleable. The researches of botanists have shown, that from the bark of *Cornus florida*, which grows in all our woods, a substance is easily extracted, rivalling in its virtues the far-famed Peruvian bark, and well qualified to usurp its place should occasion demand. They have taught us also, that the *Zizania aquatica*, covering thousands of acres in our vast north-western marshes and along the banks of our sluggish southern streams, is not a useless plant, but bears a grain wholesome and nutritious, and worthy to take a place as a staple article of cultivation. The effect of the report on Ichthyology, made by order of the legislature of Massachusetts, has been to double the value of at least one species of fish, and thus bring a revenue to the hardy fishermen of the coast of several thousand dollars each year. The pollack, which is caught in great numbers, is no longer thrown aside as worthless, and deemed unfit for the market, but is rapidly increasing in estimation, and from its intrinsic excellence must become a source of much wealth to the State. Every report upon Geology presented in the several States, has brought to light treasures previously unknown.

Quarries of granite, of limestone, of slate, mines of coal, of the various metals, beds of marl, of clay, have been detected and made known, and the States which have directed these surveys are now but beginning to reap the rewards of their enlightened policy. Years must ensue before the full benefits will be experienced, for the process of disseminating information through the community is one of time, but the result is certain. In a country newly peopled, we have attained but a very partial understanding of the treasures which lie about us; and though State surveys may and will do much, yet a general knowledge of Natural History, with ten thousand laborers in the field, could of course do vastly more. When will the time come that shall see the work thus prosecuted? The answer to this question depends in a measure upon us.

We have endeavored to trace a few of the practical effects of the introduction of the study of Natural History into our schools; they furnish motives which appeal to every man's selfishness. And even viewed in this light, it appears plain that this study presents claims inferior to none. But who is willing in any case to take the worse instead of the better? Who assumes the imperfect demand, when he can bring forward one without dispute? And in the present instance, shall we be content to rest a cause like this on selfishness? Why not remember the trust reposed in us, not by man, but by Him who is man's Creator and Benefactor. This world of beauty was not made and given us as our habitation, that we might live in it to earn dollars and cents, to eat and drink and die,

like the beasts that perish. Neither was it given us to study our own private happiness, regardless of all higher aims.

“ Not enjoyment and not sorrow  
Is our destined end and way.”

We have a nobler work before us. How sublime, how exalting the thought, that here we can begin the study of the works of God, further and further we can press our researches, higher will become our aspirations after that light which none but the Author of these works can give ; years will but show us more fully the boundless field which lies before us unexplored ; old age will never quench the ardor of our love, until at last we stand before the throne of God, prepared in a better world, with faculties bursting from their imprisonment to angelic strength, to develop those truths, to appreciate those beauties which here were beyond the reach of our enfeebled intellect. This is no dream of the fancy. God made this world of ours, He made the better world beyond it. And we cannot believe, that if here our hearts are trained to pious, devout study of His works, that study must cease when a higher life begins. It were to say, that He considers the perfect beings of his handiwork unworthy the attention of any minds but those bound down to things of earth. It cannot be ; in that land of bliss

“ Pursuits are various, suiting all tastes,  
Though holy all, and glorifying God.  
Observe you band pursue the sylvan stream ;  
Mounting among the cliffs, they pull the flower,

Springing as soon as pulled, and marvelling pry  
Into its veins, and circulating blood,  
And wondrous mimicry of higher life,  
Admire its colors, fragrance, gentle shape,  
And thence admire the God who made it so—  
So simple, complex, and so beautiful."

And shall we forget, that for this heavenly work we may train the children who are placed under our charge? Unless our training has a bearing upon this, it falls short of its full design. We may satisfy parents and committees, but if we have nothing in view beyond mere intellectual advancement, we are not satisfying the demands of the law of God. We assume, when we become teachers of youth, a responsibility which is fearful. We are leading immortal souls upward or downward. We acquire an influence over them, which can be wielded by no other, and for the proper exercise of that influence we must give account. In what manner can we employ it for the eternal welfare of these children, better than by teaching them to understand and to love the works of Him to whom our account must be rendered? They cannot study them as they ought, without being convinced that all is planned with infinite wisdom and with infinite kindness; that His tender mercies are over all his works. Surely such a One is worthy of their love and service; if they are unwilling to yield it, we are not to blame—we have done our duty, the result depends upon them. Here we may pause. Shall Natural History be set aside, as it has so long been, or shall it take its place of equal rank? That such a place will in future

years be assigned it, admits of scarce a doubt. Then why shall we delay? "Onward," is the motto of the age. And while in other things we adopt it as our own, let us not fall back in this, and leave untaught the noblest of all studies.



## LECTURE VI.

---

### EDUCATION—THE CONDITION OF NATIONAL GREATNESS.

---

BY PROF. E. D. SANBORN,  
OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, HANOVER, N. H.

---

IT has long been a current maxim with philosophers, that they who *think* must *govern* those who toil. So the world has been administered while more than a hundred generations of men have toiled and died; and their memorial has perished with them. A few names have been emblazoned on the rolls of fame; a few monuments mark the resting-places of the mighty dead; a few mounds or fosses tell the traveller where armed legions encamped, or conflicting squadrons met in fierce encounter, and fell,

“Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.”

“Vixerunt fortes ante Agamemnona  
Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles  
Urgentur, ignotique longa  
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.”

The history of mankind is little more than the history of courts and camps. We know how Alexander and Cæsar lived, but we do not know how the Greeks and Romans lived. History overlooks domestic life. We are chiefly indebted to *poetry* for the little we do know of the manners and morals of private life in past ages. The few have *thought* and *governed* for themselves; the many have toiled and served for their masters. So will it ever be till men learn to think, and govern themselves. Intelligence and power will ever be united. If the few alone are educated, the many must serve. But if the many become enlightened, they will govern themselves; and that sentiment which was true to life in Shakspeare's time, will become obsolete :

“ To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time ;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more : it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.”

The intellectual life of a people is infinitely more important than their physical life. The history of *opinions* is far more valuable than the history of *actions*. It is far better for us to know how men *thought* in former times, than how they *acted*. Indeed, if we know *how* they *thought*, and *where* they *lived*, we can with great certainty ascertain their

achievements ; for the principal elements of national character are the genius of a people and the circumstances which develop it. Constitutional differences of character exist in nations as in families, which essentially modify the happiness and progress of each. In families, not only diseases, passions and mental habits are hereditary, but physical peculiarities are transmitted from generation to generation. "A nose (says Irving) repeats itself through a whole long gallery of family pictures."

The castes of India are said to be distinguished by their features. Jews and Parsees are recognized by travellers at sight. The Irish all have the same contour of face and a similar expression of countenance. Accidental peculiarities are usually perpetuated. In this way some physiologists attempt to account for the varieties of the human race. A remarkable instance of the transmission of a slight deformity is mentioned in the House of Hapsburg. The thick lip was first introduced into this house by intermarrying with the Jagellons, and has for centuries marked the reigning family of Austria.

Climate, geographical position, and government, are also among the influences which essentially modify the genius and character of a nation. The striking difference which existed in language and religion between the early inhabitants of the North and South of Europe is ascribed, in part, to climate. The religion of Greece was *sensuous* ; that of Scandinavia *contemplative*. Beneath the genial skies of Southern Europe, nature is every where lovely, and always

invites the grateful inhabitant to worship, and woos the senses to enjoyment. There, in olden times,

“ The traveller slaked  
His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked  
The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills  
Gliding apace with shadows in their train,  
Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed  
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.”

Thus every department of Nature had its presiding divinity. The land was peopled with guardian gods. Not so with the inhabitants of the frozen North. The dark recesses of limitless forests ; the sunless caverns, to which men retired for shelter, all contributed to enhance the gloom and horror of their imaginary spirit land. The consecrated grove was the dwelling-place of the Deity. They deemed it inconsistent with the majesty of celestial beings to confine them within artificial walls, or to represent them in the likeness of men. Temples and images were unknown, till they learned their use from their conquerors. Though their morals were comparatively pure, their rites were often bloody and revolting. Philologists also detect the influence of climate in the prevailing languages of different zones. The sunny South has its soft and musical tones in the human voice, as in all the utterances of nature. The frozen North produces only harsh and guttural sounds.

“ Our cold Northeaster's icy fetter clips  
The native freedom of the Saxon lips ;  
See the brown peasant of the plastic South,  
How all his passions play about his mouth.

With us the feature that transmits the soul  
A frozen, passive, palsied breathing hole."

The physical features of a country also modify the character of its inhabitants. Long and high mountain ranges prevent intercourse and retard the progress of civilization ; while extensive sea-coasts and safe harbors have often afforded stimulus to enterprise and given scope and direction to the energies of a nation for centuries. Greece, Italy, and England are all countries of limited extent, and yet they have swayed the destinies of the world, and have successively furnished the governors and teachers of mankind. These countries are all provided with numerous harbors and extensive sea-coasts, inviting commercial enterprise and rewarding effort. The outlines of any one of them, upon a well-defined map, seem almost to represent a thing of life. The very land seems instinct with the spirit of enterprise.

But however great may be the influence of temperament, climate, and the geographical features of a country in moulding the character of a people, it is subject to the control of Education. In the same countries, at periods widely removed from each other, we find the extremes of social existence--brutal barbarism and refined civilization. Upon the very same soil, one nation *declines* and *disappears* ; another *rises to fame and empire*. Subjected to precisely the same influences of nature, one race *serves* and another *rules*. But there are no impediments of climate or race which may not be overcome. Under proper discipline, civilized and Christian men may spring from

any stock, and flourish on any soil and in any climate. Mental and moral culture, when its legitimate power is exerted, is able to control all other agencies which tend to create or modify national peculiarities; and I think that facts will warrant the assertion that the progress of civilization has been precisely proportioned to the education of the masses, and that national distinction has depended more upon mental and moral development than upon all other influences combined. Other influences may serve as stimuli to enterprise and mental activity, but when a thorough education of the intellect and heart supervenes, this becomes the great regulator of human conduct. We speak, with great propriety, of Oriental mind, of European mind, of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon mind, because such distinctions actually exist; but even the prominent differences thus denominated, result rather from national discipline and habits than from radical diversities of *races and countries*. We every where observe that children adopt the creed of their fathers. The descendants of Catholics become Catholics; those of Mohammedans become Mohammedans; those of Protestants become Protestants, simply because they are so taught. The same is true of theories of government, political and partisan opinions and the ordinary processes of art, trade and business. National peculiarities of thought and action are perpetuated by education. Ancient systems of instruction became effete and worthless, not merely because they were erroneous, but more especially because they were partial and limited in their operation. Intelligence and power were the hereditary birthright of the few;

ignorance and penury the necessary inheritance of the many. Egypt was the most enlightened country of antiquity. In the useful arts, according to modern interpreters of her monumental records, she would bear a favorable comparison with the most civilized nations of our own times. In the sciences, she was the teacher of the Greeks. In morals she surpassed her contemporaries, except the Jews; and in some respects she excelled them. Woman was more justly appreciated among the Egyptians than with the Jews or Greeks. "We have," says Mr. Gliddon, "the most positive and incontrovertible evidence, in a series of monuments coeval with Egyptian events for twenty-five hundred years, to prove that the female sex in Egypt was honored, civilized, educated, and as free as among ourselves; and this is the most unanswerable proof of the high civilization of that ancient people." But this high degree of culture pertained only to those who were exalted by birth and station. The multitude understood the processes of their various trades and arts, and beyond this they had no intellectual discipline. Their senses and limbs were educated, but not their minds or hearts. The priests were the depositaries of all science as well as theology. They were wise, but their wisdom was a mystery to the uninitiated. The people *toiled*, but did not *think*. They served with submission, but never aspired to rule. They obeyed with promptness, and never questioned the authority of their lords. The existence of castes served as an impassable barrier to their elevation. Such a nation, however wise its nobles and priests, must decline. That system of

education which does not tend to diffuse its advantages through the mass, is essentially defective, and contains within itself the elements of decay. Hence the wisdom of Egypt sleeps with her nobles, while the record of her oppression lives in her monuments. Her sphinxes, obelisks, pyramids and temples, upon whose ponderous blocks time has written the history of forty centuries, still testify to the hard bondage of those who reared them.

The glory of the law of the Medes and Persians was its changeless character. Where there is no *change*, there can be no *progress*. Oriental civilization, therefore, has no vitality. It is ever the same; ever weak and puerile. It affords no food to the intellect; no stimulus to thought. In India and China, every man, in his thoughts and habits, resembles every other man, like the several seeds which grow in the same capsule of a plant. Their religion, like primitive chaos, is without form and void; their history, like eternity, is without chronology. Human affections are degraded to animal instincts; human bones and muscles are converted into mechanical powers, and the human will is made a mere link in the iron chain of custom. Thousands of years make no alteration in the usages of the nation or the processes of their arts. The Chinaman of to-day is but the petrified Mongul of the age of Confucius. Indeed, the Orientals resemble fossils rather than men. They seem like the reanimated skeletons of extinct races, so potent is education in moulding the human mind and training human limbs. The Bramin teaches the doctrines contained in the Shaster, recorded in a lan-

guage which was a dead language even prior to any authentic date of their own extravagant chronology. Where religion and law limit the efforts of mind, and forbid investigation, there can be no progress. Place the Eastern nations under a free government, give them free schools and the Christian religion, and there is no reason to suppose that they would not, in a single century, equal, if not surpass the occidental world in science and literature.

The Chinese give evidence of great ingenuity in invention, and unrivalled skill in the execution of many of the useful arts. Their literature in works of imagination is by no means contemptible. Take from the Chinese mind the weight of prescription, custom, and idolatry; allow it to think without a monitor and to worship without an image, and the upward progress of the nation would be as rapid as in Germany or England. The Bramins of India are acute reasoners and able logicians; but, like the schoolmen of the dark ages, they never travel out of the written record. Mind, from age to age, revolves in the same changeless circle of puerilities. It is never excited to new effort, never enlarged by new ideas. But let the Indian mind be subjected, for three generations, to the discipline of European schools, and that land will become as prolific in philosophers and philanthropists as it now is in priests and fakirs.

The Jews, for nearly two thousand years, have been a persecuted, oppressed and disfranchised people, yet they have never lost their distinction as an intellectual people. Whether in exile, in prison, or in the marts of business, the Jew has never lost his

native shrewdness or characteristic vigor of thought. Whenever the laws of the land have tolerated the Jewish citizen, he has never failed to make his influence felt. In the Middle Ages the Jews, though scorned and insulted by the meanest of the Christian name, were in times of distress the bankers and creditors of all the sovereigns of Europe. At the present day the most distinguished financiers, and many of the most renowned literati of Europe, belong to that race, so long "*scattered and peeled.*"

"Nearly one half of the public journals of Germany have been for a long time conducted by Jews," and many of the professors in German universities are of the same stock. To what circumstance do the sons of Israel owe their intellectual superiority? The Hebrew nation, from its very origin, was subjected to a rigid course of education, which gave them their mental strength, their iron power of will, their indomitable perseverance and their undying hope. The themes of study presented in the Scriptures of the Old Testament are the most elevated, the most invigorating and the most controlling that can occupy the thoughts of man. The thinking powers are tasked to the utmost to comprehend them. No merely human production propounds such momentous truths. In following the loftiest flights of inspired seers, the boldest imagination cowers her wing, and shrinks back, appalled, to the shores of time. Who can seriously contemplate the attributes of Jehovah, as they are portrayed by Moses and the prophets, without exclaiming, with unaffected humility, "What is man

that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?"

Can the human mind become dwarfish and feeble, while it is made familiar with the stupendous realities of eternity?—with the relations of the soul to its Creator?—with its immortality, and its subjection to the awards of the last great day? These themes have constituted the substance of the Jewish education, and the study of them has stimulated the Jewish intellect and given it dignity, vigor and manly energy amid the accumulated insults of oppressors. When the veil of prejudice, which now excludes the light of the sun of righteousness from their minds, shall have been removed, no nation will be better prepared, by its discipline, to lead the world's civilization. In estimating national character, we are apt to ascribe too much to *birth* and *race*, and too little to *culture*. The Saviour discarded that standard of estimation when he said to the Jews who boasted of their descent from the father of the faithful: "God is able of these stones to raise up seed unto Abraham."

We talk of genealogies, of blood, birth, and race—of family distinctions and hereditary rank—

"As though a man were not a man for a' that."

Every human being, who has the common attributes of humanity, whatever may be his parentage or race, is capable of indefinite improvement; and there is no tribe or race that may not be elevated to the highest grade of refinement and cultivation, provided that suitable teachers and a sufficient length of time be allowed for their gradual improvement. The savage

and the sage have the same faculties in number and kind. The philosopher of the nineteenth century has acquired no new good faculty, nor parted with any old bad one which his barbarian ancestor did not possess three thousand years ago. In the words of another—"An assemblage of civilized men, on this side of the globe, convening to devise measures for diminishing crimes, and thus to reduce the number of capital punishments, were born with the same number and kind of faculties—though doubtless differing greatly in proportion and activity—with a company of Battas islanders, on the opposite side of the globe, who perhaps, at the same time, may be going to attend the holiday rites of a public execution, and, as is their wont, *to dine on the criminal!*"

It cannot be expected, however, that brutal savages, whose degradation has been the work of ages, will be raised, during the life of one generation, to a high state of mental and moral culture. But time and patience will gain the victory, and triumph over barbarism. They have done it already. The far-famed Anglo-Saxons were once blood-thirsty, degraded savages. In the first century of our era, Tacitus says of them—"When the State has no war to manage, the German mind is sunk in sloth. The chase does not afford sufficient employment. The time is past in sleep and gluttony. The brave warrior, who in the field faced every danger, becomes in time of peace a listless sluggard! The management of the house and lands he leaves to the women, to the old men and the weakest of the slaves. He himself lounges in stupid repose, by a wonderful diversity of

nature, since the same men so love inaction and hate quiet." This description would apply word for word to our North-American Indians, as well as to the primitive Germans.

Yet this stupid, sensual, intemperate people were our progenitors. Their physical energies were roused by the shock of Roman arms ; their mental powers were quickened by the stimulus of Roman literature ; their moral powers were renewed by the grace of the gospel of Christ. "Without the fruits of Roman civilization, the Germans would not have ceased to be barbarians." Without Christianity, they never would have gained their intellectual preëminence. It is not owing to any superiority of race or endowment, that they have become the leaders of modern civilization, but to their discipline and education. Under these heads I include both the influence of circumstances that have developed the manly energy of the race, as well as the moral and intellectual truths which have expanded and strengthened their mental powers. It ill becomes us, therefore, to boast of our descent, or to glory in an ancestry,

      . . . . . "whose blood  
Has crept through scoundrels ever since the flood."

The same blood flows in the veins of the degenerate Persian and Indian. Modern philologists have, by linguistic affinities, traced the Germanic race to their primitive abodes in Asia. It is now admitted by scholars, "that the Teutonic dialects belong to one great family with the Latin, the Greek, the Sanscrit, and other languages of the Indo-European chain."

The relationship between the Persians and Germans is so intimate, that we not only trace many of the customs of the Teutonic tribes to Persia, but we have recourse to the Persian language to explain national appellations, such as German, Prussian, and Saxon. As early as the time of Herodotus, the *Γεγανοι* appear among the ancient Persian tribes. One of the most powerful of the Persian dynasties is denominated the Sassanides, a word derived, as is supposed, from "Sassan," which is kindred to "Sachsen" or "Saxon." "Von Hammer calls the Germans a Bactriano-Median nation. He makes the name Germani or Sermani, in its primitive import to have meant those who followed the worship of Buddha, and hence the Germans, according to him, are that ancient and primitive race who came down from the mountains of Upper Asia, the cradle of the human species, and, spreading themselves over the lower country more to the South, gave origin to the Persian and other early nations." If there be only verisimilitude in the poetic biography of Cyrus, by Xenophon, the ancient Persians were far in advance of their contemporary cousins, the migratory Germans. But the Persians have sunk into effeminacy and sloth, while the Germans have taken the world by storm, and now control its destinies. Why has one branch of this great family retrograded, and the other advanced? It is owing, undoubtedly, to the different discipline, both physical and intellectual, to which they have been subjected.

The Germans were adventurers in Europe. Their onward march was ever aggressive. The dangers

and difficulties which they encountered called forth all their strength and all their sagacity. Their wandering life compelled them to abandon the practice of polygamy, which has so long enfeebled Oriental civilization. This unnatural custom has never prevailed in Europe, except among the Turks, who may be looked upon only as an armed encampment from Asia, holding a precarious residence in Europe by the consent of neighboring nations. The very spirit of adventure begets personal independence, self-respect, and a contempt for dangers. The wants and necessities peculiar to a state of migration also develop and strengthen the perceptive and inventive powers, and give to the untutored mind great prudence and skill. Hence the laws, governments and institutions of Nomadic tribes have often been superior to those which the earlier civilized nations have adopted. This is true of the whole Scythian or Gothic race. New scenes and frequent perils have given a vigor and acuteness of intellect to the emigrant, which the quiet and monotonous routine of Oriental life never could elicit. The Gothic race has ever been essentially free; the Persians have been crushed by despotism. The institutions of the former have ever been open to change; those of the latter have been *unchangeable*. The institutions of such a land are like mechanical moulds, in which human souls are fashioned, each bearing the same impress, each modelled by the same unyielding matrix. Without the light of science and religion, the human mind faints and droops like the sickly plant deprived of the sun's invigorating rays. Enjoying only the reflected light of learning and reli-

gion, the European peasant ranks almost infinitely above the Persian serf or the Hindoo ryot. Indeed, the condition of the lower classes, in every age, has been improved only by the progress of thought and the diffusion of truth. To ascertain the career of the human race in intelligence and virtue, we need only compare the slave of the primitive theocracy, the helot of Sparta, and the serf of the Middle Ages, with the peasant of Queen Victoria's reign. Despotism paralyses and benumbs the human intellect. A chained body is of little use either to its owner or to others; a fettered mind is equally inefficient. Freedom quickens the powers both of body and of the mind. Under its highest influence, the human faculties glow with intense ardor, and move with almost resistless impetuosity. To secure right action, these faculties must be guided and controlled by a judicious education. Compared with Oriental races, the Anglo-Saxons have ever enjoyed permanent freedom. Freedom of thought and freedom of action have been united. The governments of every branch of the Gothic stock have been limited in their powers. The British constitution, according to Montesquieu, originated in the woods of Germany. The mind of the race has never been confined by prescription nor dwarfed by superstition. It has ever been free to *plan* and free to *execute*; not absolutely *free*, but comparatively so. Free governments have formed the basis of Anglo-Saxon greatness, free schools its crowning excellence, and free churches its permanent glory.

From that remote period, when Odin led his warriors from the very cradle of mankind into Northern Europe, the history of the Teutonic race presents a series of struggles, conflicts and victories unparalleled in the annals of time. Their progress has been a triumphal march,—not over kingdoms, but across continents,—till they have almost encompassed the globe. The mind of the people has been developed by incessant exercise. Necessity has compelled them to think, to reason and invent, and to avail themselves of past experience to secure future success. Great *deeds* result from great *thoughts*. Invention must precede construction. The head must *design* before the hand can *execute*. A comprehensive intellect originates comprehensive plans. Strength of purpose begets persevering effort. Continued success confirms the confidence and self-respect of the agent. Hope is the child of confidence. Extinguish hope, and enterprise dies. “True philosophy throws the incentive of hope into the field of human research, and instead of bidding us pace the monotony of one eternal circle of ideas, tells us to gird our faculties to new achievements, and to prepare the world for a happier day.” Intellectual as well as material wealth tends to reproduction. “To him that hath shall be given,” is true every where and under all circumstances. That nation whose policy fosters science and literature, must become learned and wise. That people whose watchwords are *liberty, intelligence* and *virtue*, must lead the world’s civilization. Hitherto, the Teutonic race have been, every where, the cham-

pions of freedom, the guardians of virtue and the friends of learning. When they had achieved their own liberty, they enacted laws to protect it. When they acquired knowledge by experience and discipline, they established schools to perpetuate and diffuse it. Their success in elevating their race has been precisely in proportion to the equitable distribution of the blessings of liberty and education. Whenever this principle has been violated, national progress has been retarded and national glory dimmed. Wherever the discussion of any of the legitimate subjects of human thought has been prohibited, as in Germany, the public mind has been developed almost to monstrosity in other directions. When the State has neglected to provide for the intellectual wants of the people, as in England, ignorance has given perpetuity to error and superstition, the poor have been arrayed against the rich, the unlearned against the wise, and disaffection and murmuring have disturbed the peace of the realm. So it will ever be where there are no free schools. The same evils existed among the most civilized of the ancient nations. We eulogize the culture and refinement of the Greeks; but how many of the Greeks were educated? Where the slaves, who were, often, of the same blood and race with their masters, outnumbered the free citizens four to one, in what sense could the people be said to be enlightened? It is true, Greece had poets, orators, statesmen and philosophers, who have been the teachers of all subsequent generations, whose peerless intellects shine like suns in the literary firmament,

whose productions in all past history first attract the student's attention, like islands of light amid an ocean of darkness.

But, with no press, and few public libraries, *their* influence, even in their own nation, was abridged and limited. The philosophers set up schools to propagate their own dogmas; the State set up schools to educate its free citizens; but how few were their pupils compared with the great mass of the enslaved population which the State was bound to educate? The dramatists and orators were far more efficient educators of the people than the philosophers or pedagogues. The *theatre* was their school-room, the *Bema* their printing-office. But the drama and oratory were very imperfect substitutes for social libraries and unlicensed printing. There could be no security for the State while the multitude derived their morals from the stage and their political opinions from partisan demagogues. The passions of the people were inflamed by appeals to their sympathy; their reason was clouded and perverted by sophistry, and their actions, consequent upon such training, were rash, ill-timed and ruinous. In all past history statesmen have been more anxious to elevate *themselves* than their *constituents*. They have chosen rather to *lead* than *instruct* the masses. Hence the annals of time are chiefly occupied with the achievements of ambitious men; while the historian can scarcely stay to enumerate the millions on whose necks they rode to power. Men have been valued, like brutes, for their ability to *toil* and their patience to *endure*. Christianity introduces another standard

of judgment, and reveals a more excellent method of education. Christ first taught mankind the inestimable value of a single soul. His example proved that he estimated men by their capacity for knowledge and happiness, and not by the adventitious circumstances of wealth, birth, and station. When he had finished his mission of love, his dying message to his disciples was, "Go *teach* all nations." The momentous truths revealed in the gospel, at once gave a new stimulus to the human mind. The infinite superiority of the future world over the present, turned the thoughts of men to the wants of the soul rather than the body. The gospel presented a new class of motives for contemplation, and prompted to a higher and nobler course of action. The Anglo-Saxons were among the last of the barbarous nations of Europe to adopt Christianity. All the chiefs who founded other Teutonic dynasties in the Roman provinces of Europe—"Alaric, Theodoric, Clovis, Alboin"—were zealous Christians. The followers of Ida and Cerdic brought to their settlements in Britain all the superstitions of the Elbe." But when the Anglo-Saxons once adopted the Christian faith, they made rapid progress in civilization. Wherever the gospel was preached, learning followed in the train of religion. So has it ever been. Literature has always been the handmaid of the gospel, when preached in its purity. Schools and churches have been *inseparable*. The Christian clergy have ever been the staunch friends of Education. In the Middle Ages the Catholic church, though "corrupted by Roman policy and Gothic ignorance, Grecian ingenuity and Syrian

asceticism, still retained enough of the sublime theology and benevolent morality of her earlier days to elevate many intellects and purify many hearts." In the fulness of time, when the Teutonic mind had been prepared, by its previous discipline, to declare and maintain its independence of priestly tutelage and ecclesiastical domination, the Reformation gave a new impulse to human progress. From that period to the present hour, the two great divisions of the Christian church have been arrayed against each other both in *theory* and *practice*. What Protestants have loved, Catholics have hated; and because Protestants have chosen to be guided by light and knowledge, Catholics have preferred darkness and ignorance. An intelligent faith and an enlightened intellect have been opposed to blind credulity and soulless formality.

"The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe," says Macaulay, "have, under the rule of Catholicism, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor; while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes and statesmen, philosophers and poets." If any one doubts that education, under Protestant auspices, is essential to national greatness and national prosperity, let him compare the present condition of Scotland and Italy; of Spain and Holland; of protestant Germany and Austria; of the United States, and the countries of South America.

Protestantism has ever fostered education. Puritanism has made it a pillar in the temple of God. Our New England fathers began to provide for the wants of the head and heart ere they had secured a comfortable shelter for the body. Only six years after the settlement of Boston, the General Court of Massachusetts passed an order for the establishment of a college at New-town. This decree was accompanied with an appropriation too, small indeed, but if compared with the present resources of that State, it would be equivalent to half a million of dollars.

Our system of free schools was the offspring of their philanthropy. It grew up under their guardianship. In thus providing for the education of the young, they were moved principally by religious motives. The salvation of the soul was their chief concern. They looked upon the uncultivated mind as the genial soil of superstition, heresy and crime; and so far they were *right*. Ignorance not only perils the interests of time, but those of eternity. They, therefore, conscientiously devoted themselves to the education of their children, that they might fit them for Heaven. The wants of the soul were paramount to all others, and claimed their first attention. We are setting up another standard. With the increase of wealth the desire of it has also increased. Men are estimated rather by what they *have* than by what they *are*. Hence the tendency of modern customs is to starve the mind and surfeit the body; to abound in worldly goods rather than to be "rich in good works." The present age is undoubtedly *material* in its aims.

Wealth and honors are more highly prized than honesty and virtue. Commerce and manufactures engross the thoughts of men, to the exclusion of science and religion. Hence we build custom-houses and factories, and leave the old school-houses as our fathers built them. We construct rail-roads and steam-boats, and leave our literary institutions to languish. We live in "ceiled houses," adorned with costly furniture and embellished with works of art, while we confine our children, during the best period of their lives, to low, dark, ill-ventilated ruins by the roadside, which are scarcely fit for the folding of sheep or the herding of swine. In many of our country towns, the man of gray hairs may still visit the scenes of his youthful studies, and find his grandchildren imprisoned within the same

“Walls on which he tried his graving skill,  
The very name he carved existing still ;  
The bench on which he sat, while deep employed,  
Though mangled, hacked and hewed, yet not destroyed.”

It is a mistaken policy, which aims at temporal prosperity without the support of a thorough Christian education. I have endeavored to show that national distinction has ever rested on mental and moral culture; and that nations have become *great* precisely in proportion to the general diffusion of intelligence and morality. There are no interests pertaining to man, whether they relate to time or eternity, which are not directly promoted by a sound education. If we wish our children to become rich and honored, we must educate them. A well-disciplined mind, in a

healthy body, is a young man's best capital in commencing business. It is, too, an unfailing source of happiness, *purer* and *higher* than wealth can purchase or sense enjoy.

" What is a man,  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed ?—a *beast*, no more.  
Sure he that made us with such large discourse  
Looking before and after, gave us not  
That capability and godlike reason  
To rust in us, unused."

But if we have no higher aim than to enhance the value of our possessions, it is our wisest policy to educate the rising generation. Elevate the schools of a city or town, and you at once enhance the value of its property. There is not a dwelling-house or rood of land in any town in New England, that will not command a higher price in consequence of the improvement of the schools in its vicinity. Industry and thirst follow mental culture as surely as seed-time is succeeded by harvest. Society, with us, is a copartnership. Every man is interested in the prosperity of every other man. It is for the interest of every man, that his neighbors should be wise and virtuous. Ignorance, improvidence and crime are not confined, in their influence, to the ignorant, improvident and wicked. The whole community suffers from the errors and sins of every member of it. This results from our social liabilities. We are so constituted as to be mutually dependent on each other for happiness and prosperity. No community can prosper, where a majority of its members are ignorant

and wicked. If you would have men industrious, trustworthy, faithful and economical, give them a good *Christian* education. Educate, completely and harmoniously, the head, the heart, and the hands; give them intelligence, virtue and skill. No amount of material improvements, in machinery, equipage, apparel and architecture, will compensate for the want of thorough discipline in early life. Wealth and power can never save the State. Had these proved conservative elements of empire, Egypt, Babylon and Rome never had fallen. There is no safety for our blood-bought institutions, but in the general diffusion of knowledge and the early and constant inculcation of true religion. Where free suffrage prevails, we must have a free press, free schools, and free churches. Our writers, our teachers, and our pastors must be men "who fear God and work righteousness." If we fail to secure such guardians of the public weal, the best portion of our history is already written. Our increase of national resources will only enhance our danger and hasten our ruin.

" Call Archimedes from his buried tomb  
Upon the plain of vanished Syracuse,  
And feelingly the sage shall make report  
How insecure, how baseless in itself,  
Is the philosophy whose sway depends  
On mere material instruments ; how weak  
Those arts and high inventions, if unpropred  
By virtue."



## LECTURE VII.

---

ON THE

### DUTIES OF LEGISLATURES IN RELATION TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES.

---

BY REV. CHARLES BROOKS,  
OF BOSTON, MASS.

---

The legislature of any State in this Union may enact the following laws:

Towns having fifty families shall provide one public free school, to be kept six months in each year; towns having one hundred families, one school for one year; one hundred and fifty families, two schools for nine months each; five hundred families, two schools for one year—and so on. Towns may assess taxes on all persons and property, for the support of public free schools. The selectmen of any town shall determine the location of the school-houses. The school committee shall procure and examine the teachers; and they shall determine what books may be used. Each town shall furnish books to the poor gratis. If districts refuse to establish schools, it shall

be the duty of the school committee to go and do it. If the town refuses, it shall be fined. Contiguous districts may be united, in order to accomplish a fit classification of pupils. There shall be made to the legislature annual returns from every town, of all matters connected with the public schools. Clergymen are invited to take special interest in the schools. So much money as any town raises for the support of public schools, in such proportion shall said town be allowed to draw of the public money for the same purpose. All these laws, and others like them, have been passed by legislatures; and they may pass many more such, and yet not touch the deepest wants of the age.

To ask if legislatures have the right to enact laws, required in the nineteenth century, is like asking if a parent has a right to do the best thing he can for his children. The only question is, *how far* should the legislative right be exercised?

The duties of legislatures in relation to common schools may be summed up in this general statement; they are bound, politically and morally, to bring into natural and efficient action all the energies, physical, intellectual and moral, which are born in the State, or which belong to it; thus giving by law to every child the opportunity of making the most of himself. All the human faculties should be developed in their natural order, proper time, and due proportion. To make this plain, let us place before our mind's eye a man, whose *physical* organization is perfectly developed, but let us suppose this mature physical organism to have no intellect and no conscience! What

is he? Just one third of a man. Now, let us suppose another person, who, to such physical development adds a perfect *intellectual* expansion; but he has no conscience! What is he? Just two-thirds of a man. Lastly, let us suppose a third person, who has all the physical and all the intellectual powers of the two just mentioned, and in addition has a proportionate development of his *moral* faculties! He exhibits a specimen of entire harmony of powers, each in its legitimate maturity, and each in pure, symmetrical and successful action! What is he? A MAN. A *whole* man. God's idea of a man.

It is for such human beings that God legislates; and all we ask is, that our civil fathers will follow God's example, and give children a chance to unfold *all* the capabilities of their complex constitutions. There are materials in God's world for producing such a man; a Maximinus in strength, a Bacon in intellect, and a Howard in benevolence; and we say, that the legislature is bound to act, *in union with parents*, in producing such results. And why? Because the child, by creation, has a right to education; a right which no Christian legislature can legally withhold. The State of Indiana, in her recent noble vote upon the establishment of free schools, seems to recognize this great fact. If the members of a legislature believe that proper physical training will secure health, that proper intellectual training will secure prosperity, and that proper moral training will secure happiness, is it not their solemn duty to find out how *such* training may be applied to the rising generation?

The topics of study should be arranged in a gradu-

ally ascending series, corresponding to the gradually unfolding powers of the pupil.

Leaving to better judges the due arrangement of subjects, I would suggest, as a substitute for some portion of the popular topics, such studies as *Physiology*, so far as the laws of health are concerned; *Natural History*, so far as shall enable the youthful mind "to look through nature up to nature's God;" *Useful Arts*, so far as they may be needed in after life; *Natural Philosophy*, so far as to indicate the simple forces of the universe; *Sketching*, so far as to represent a machine, landscape or face; *Music*, so far as to aid in this part of public worship; *Voluntary Discussions*, so far as to teach grammar, conversation, and the laws of fair debate; *Morals*, so far as to unfold our duties to ourselves, to others and to God. All these studies draw out the child's soul, which is education. The legislature should establish the following

*Classification of Schools.* 1. Primary schools, for children from four to eight years of age. 2. Grammar schools, for those from eight to twelve. 3. High schools, for those from twelve to sixteen. 4. Normal schools, for the preparation of teachers. 5. Teachers' Institutes, for the improvement of those teachers who have not been trained in a Normal school.

*Governmental Organization.* The supervisory power should be,—1. The local school committee, with the largest powers which can be trusted to a town. 2. County superintendents, to be chosen by ballot in the county. 3. Board of Education, composed of the governor, lieutenant-governor, president

of the senate, speaker of the house of representatives, treasurer of the State, the county superintendents, and the secretary of the board.

Thus constituted, the supervisory power would have completeness and efficiency. The county superintendents would be personally acquainted with every school in their several jurisdictions, and would therefore bring to the Board all the facts which would be necessary for profound, practical, and progressive legislation. Each town would make its report, and the county superintendents would make theirs to the Board of Education, and this Board would make its report annually to the legislature, to whom all the delegated powers must be responsible. The county superintendents should teach in every school, and deliver lectures on all school subjects, and also conduct examinations. The secretary of the Board should go through the State delivering lectures to parents and teachers, and spreading all the useful knowledge he can gain. He must be Argus-eyed, Briarean-handed.

A word of explanation about the Normal school. It is the first duty of a legislature to secure good teachers. The profoundest philosophy of a system of public free schools may be summed up in these eight words: *As is the teacher, so is the school.* The schoolmaster is the intellectual and moral missionary going forth to preach the glad tidings of knowledge and virtue to the youthful population of the land. No office this side the sun more honorable! No office this side eternity more important! How necessary that he should be fitted for his work! That he may properly govern his school he should have a soldier's

sternness overlaying a lover's good-will. That he may properly teach his pupils, he must have wealth at will, and will to use his wealth. It is the object of Normal schools to confer these powers, and bring out these qualifications.

Without time to explain the details of the system now indicated, I would ask, What does the world demand from the leading Christian republic in the nineteenth century? I answer, it demands a new dispensation of legislation—*a new idea—A NEW ERA*. I desire to utter, in the capital of this State, and before this crowded assembly, my emphatic protest against the prevalent maxims of legislation, as they relate to public schools; and I aver, that legislation on these highest interests of humanity is narrow and partial, and therefore unphilosophic and unchristian. It has never yet risen to the just conception of the dignity or importance, the power or the sacredness of the subject. Take the thirty State legislatures of this Union, and what is true of them on this momentous subject? They begin with a false view of human nature and human wants; and they end, where error and ignorance always end, in defeat and harm. There may be exceptions; but most of them seem to have no more apprehension of the extent and fertility of a child's mind, or of the relationships of childhood to mature life, than they have of the way in which the pyramids were built. They legislate well enough about hay, beef and fish, calico, hardware and taxes, because they understand these; but when they come to legislate upon the human mind and human character, *powers upon which all outward prosperity*

*depends*, then they seem blind to the first facts of the case. It is this blank ignorance of the paramount needs of society of which we have a right to complain, and we call on all citizens not to select men as legislators who can represent only the lowest strata of human wants. From examining the records of government, we might almost conclude that legislatures regarded men either as natural law-breakers, or fox-like traffickers, or social shirks, or uncompromising office-seekers, or intolerant bigots ; for their chief action seems to be to restrain, to limit and to guard. Every page of the statute-book frowns with penalties, prohibitions, fines and threats. Cannot Christianity raise society to a moral self-respect, that shall make a higher legislation more efficient ? If our republic declares to the world, that knowledge and virtue are the only sources of safety, improvement, and happiness, shall legislatures continue to regard man as only a stomach or a fist ? While they present motives for bringing out the powers of the sea and soil, shall they offer no motives for bringing out the powers of the mind and heart ? Will they never recognize the *whole* nature of man, the divine philosophy of life, the sacred affinities of moral truth, the noble aspirations of youthful genius, and the immortal thirst for the " *Excelsior* " ? Will they never rise to the Christian idea of legislation, and do as an assembly of Saviours would do, if they were called to legislate for the utmost good of future generations ?

You reply to all this, and say, that society is not ready for such legislative action. And why is it not ready ? Because you, and such as you, *continue to*

*assert that it is not ready!* Change your hackneyed phrase, and say, emphatically, that society *is* ready, and how long will it be before a new and blessed era shall dawn on the State? Take up the trumpet of advice, and blow a blast that drowsiness itself shall hear, and in ten years the masses will begin to call for *Christian* legislation upon schools. Legislatures then would see that in a most important respect they stand "*in loco parentis*" to all the children of the commonwealth; and, therefore, that it is their solemn duty to see that the child has in the school-house every thing of education which it will hereafter need in the world. They would then see that national character is manufactured, by seeing that the elements which *should* compose that character, are doing their proper work upon the formative periods of youthful development. They would recognize the fact, that the laws of a State have much to do with the morality of a State; and that the morality of a State has every thing to do with its peace, thrift and happiness; and, moreover, that Christianity, enthroned in the heart of any people, is the cheapest police that any government can maintain.

Let us, from to-day, begin and hold up the idea of a new era in legislation—God's idea of legislation—a recognition of the highest motive-powers of man. Then legislatures will urge as well as restrain; direct as well as guard; instruct as well as rule; and instead of the thunder tones of threats and penalties, they will send forth the sweet music of encouragement and approbation.

To indicate a practical beginning only of this new

era, let me suggest, that a legislature should see that seventy-five cents at least is assessed upon each individual of the whole population, for the support of public free schools. Property should pay for its protection and for the enhancement of its value by legislation.

Government, also, should see that the best books are used in the schools, and owned by the State, and should sell those books at the cost of paper, printing and binding.

Government, moreover, should see, not only that purposely-prepared and competent teachers are provided, but that inducements are offered sufficiently strong to secure their services through many years. For this purpose teachers, who show extraordinary merit and remain long in one place, should receive some public token of respect and reward. But, more than all, should legislatures see that teachers, especially female ones, receive compensation adequate to their high and arduous labors. Considering the amount of bodily toil, mental exhaustion and sacred responsibility, there is not a class of laborers on earth who are so poorly paid. It is the fashion in some towns to pauperize education by ranking it with eleemosynary stipends to foundling hospitals; and they seem to think that the more they spend on their highways, and the less they spend on their schools, so much the better for the town. The legislature should see that the highest interests of the community are not thus degraded; for of all dear things on earth the dearest of all is a *cheap* schoolmaster.

Again ; a paternal and Christian legislature should pass the law of *compulsion*, requiring that every child shall receive some intellectual and moral culture. In the present state of our mixed population, this law is called for as our defence. We have in the United States more than a million and a half of children, between the ages of four and sixteen, who are in no school, and who can neither read nor write ! Do you ask, what are we going to do with them ? This is not the question. The question is, what are they going to do with *us* ? We can disarm their animal ferocity only by the implantation of moral principle ; and this preventive process can be applied, in nineteen cases out of twenty, *only* during the period of youth. Is it not the duty of the legislature to see that it is applied ? The law for compelling children to attend some school, whether their parents will or not, is a law of political economy and comprehensive love. The reasons for such a law are these :—Society has a right to defend itself against crime, against murder, arson, theft, etc. Now, I would ask, if society has a right to defend itself against crime, whether it has not an equal right to defend itself against the *cause* of crime, which is IGNORANCE ? Has it a right to defend itself against an effect, and no right to defend itself against a cause ? If you force a young man into prison, because he is a thief, we call upon you to force him, while a boy, into a school-house, to prevent him becoming a thief. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Moreover, every child should be instructed, because every one should be able to read the constitution and laws of his country, and to judge of the candidates

for public office; but, above all, because every human being should be able to read the laws of God, and to obey that sacred injunction—"search the scriptures daily." What apology can a Christian legislature make to God or to liberty, for allowing its population to grow up in ignorance? In the kingdom of Prussia, this law of compulsion has been in force ever since 1819; and in that kingdom there is not a human being who does not receive education, intellectual and moral, sufficient for all the wants of common life. The law was violently opposed at first, but so benignant have been its effects, that now not a family in the realm would wish its repeal. It had been in operation but fourteen years, when pauperism and crime had diminished thirty-eight per cent. At a time like the present, when legal inquiries have traced back adult crime to infantile neglect and puerile ignorance, when craft and outrage are round about us, like water round a diving-bell, and when these violations of justice and order are increasing in faster ratio than population or even wealth—at such a time, when legislatures come together and debate for months how to *punish*, have they no right to say a word about *prevention*? In the name of humanity I ask, if legislatures have a right to *hang*, and have no right to *educate*? Ought they not to wake up and look sharply around them, to see how the *sources* of an evil torrent may best be dried up, where the strongest dam may be thrown across its impetuous course, and into what side-channels its blind strength may be diverted?

A law, compelling every parent to see that his children are educated, is demanded by enlightened patriotism and Christian philanthropy. If a parent be so weak or wicked as to refuse to his child the daily bread of knowledge, let the legislature stand in the place of parent to that child, and do for him what his nature demands and the public safety requires. To enforce the law, let the selectmen of a town be empowered to impose, on a delinquent parent, a fine not less than one dollar and not more than five dollars. This fine would not need to be imposed in any town more than half-a-dozen times, because public sentiment would so heartily approve its benevolent aim, that it would silently change all objections, as was the case in Prussia. It is my firm conviction, that if a proper law should be passed, it would not take more than five years to bring it into general popularity. But to remove all objections to such a law, let towns be left free to enforce the law or not.

Many other laws would be required in the new era of Christian legislation ; but I have space to mention only one more :—*a law to secure moral instruction to every child in the State.* Why should not legislatures recognize the highest attributes of humanity ? A child's *moral* nature, by which he loves God and man and virtue, is as much a fact in this vast creation as is his *intellectual*, by which he studies mathematics or invents a machine ; and moreover, *it is as capable of culture.* Its culture is more important to society than that of the intellect, because moral teaching produces all other teaching, and is reproduced in

all others. The moral nature of man is, therefore, to be recognized as a fact, a positive fact, an indsetructible fact; and furthermore as *the* fact which underlies all real improvement and all permanent happiness. A wise Creator has bestowed the sovereignty on the moral, and not on the intellectual part of our mixed constitution. Human legislation should therefore second the divine; thereby securing to society the sovereignty of conscience.

How can this be done? I answer—by choosing for legislators those who are in advance of the public in all the great ideas of life, trade and improvement. They should be legislators who are, in the highest political sense, fathers in the commonwealth; men who, in quiet and mature reflection, have elicited and estalished great, yet simple principles; men of forecast and experience, who can throw fertile and needed truths into the fountains of public thought without dangerously troubling them. Such legislators, who represent not only the physical and metaphysical, but also the *moral* attributes and capabilities of their constituents, would see and feel that the human soul—that God-begotten thing sent into this world to act and suffer the allotments of humanity—has a right to moral expansion through the instrumentalities which its Creator has furnished. Such legislators would see and feel, that this world is our school-house, that God is our teacher, and the Bible is our class-book. They would see and feel, that education is the natural continuation of the process of creation, taking up that process just where the Deity left it. They would see and feel the propriety of having short portions of

the Bible read and explained every morning in the school; of having prayers read from books specially prepared for schools; of having moral questions discussed by the pupils, and moral lectures delivered by the teacher; and of introducing, as text-books, such manuals as "Sullivan's Moral Class-Book," "Wayland's Moral Science," "Hall's Morals for Schools," and such like. Such legislators would see and feel, that to deny to the hungering and thirsting soul of childhood the nourishment which these books are prepared to give, would be little less than committing murder by starvation. Such legislators would not interfere with any sectarian prejudices; but, rising above them all, would fix on the two central principles of the spiritual universe, JUSTICE and LOVE, and would so embody them in the educational codes of the State, as to silence noisy demagogues and intolerant bigots.

May I say a word to the legislature of Vermont? Your Constitution wisely recognizes the principles for which I have been contending. In accordance with its spirit, let me ask you, civil fathers, to consider the *whole* nature of man. His physical, intellectual and moral powers are each dear to God; let them be equally dear to you. Give them all their fair, natural chance in your State. If, by partial or penurious legislation concerning schools, you do every thing to sharpen the intellect of youth, and do nothing to Christianize the conscience; if you make a giant of that intellect and a dwarf of that conscience, do you not thereby double the power of doing wrong, and

proportionably lessen the disposition to do right? We invite you to take the most comprehensive views of human society, and to make the deepest philosophy of human nature the basis of your legislation. Congress, when it sat apart a portion of the public lands, in every town, as devoted to education, has set you a noble example; and it seems to say to you, that next to parents, you are responsible for the intellectual and moral culture of the rising generation; and especially of those whom the ordinary agencies of society cannot reach. We trust you will heed a nation's exhortation.

We ask you to render the public schools of your State attractive to youth. Furnish them with accomplished teachers, good libraries, and extensive apparatus. Where the honey is, there the bees will always come. You promise tempting rewards to any citizen who shall rear the fairest forest of oaks, or raise the largest cattle, or invent the best machine,—would it be unworthy of your patriotism to bring your approbation to bear, in some form, on the best school-teacher, on the fittest class-book, or the worthiest pupil? Are not mind and morals staples worth some patronage? You spend vast sums in prisons and penitentiaries, in watchmen and sheriffs, will you not provide something which will render these useless? If you plant a moral principle in the plastic mind of youth, you put there a hundred governors. Are you not bound to make the process, which is preventive of crime, so perfect that the curative one will not be needed?

Perhaps you reply to all this, and say—"We are afraid of sectarianism." And so are we: but we are not so much afraid of any of the prevalent forms of Christianity as we are of the heathenism which threatens us; we are not half so much afraid of sectarianism as we are of infidelity, or as we are of the blackness and darkness of ignorance. Better eat sour bread than starve.

Civil Fathers! a deepening moral responsibility rests on you. You are addressed on every side by emphatic voices. Our pilgrim ancestors, from the rock of Plymouth, call out to you from the visible past, and command you to follow up the two great principles of the *church* and *school-house*, which they have bequeathed to us in trust. So, too, from the invisible future, do coming generations call to you, ere they arrive, beseeching you to provide for them that instruction, which shall make them equal to all the demands of an advanced civilization. Will you be deaf to the command of your fathers, or the prayer of your children?

I have thus, Gentlemen of the Institute, indicated, not as I had wished, but as I am able, the new era in legislation, which it seems to me the Christian religion demands of the leading republic of the world in the nineteenth century. Abler pens, I hope, will convert these hints to life and power. God grant that our country may so strike that grand key-note, that all the republics of our hemisphere, which are just in their childhood, and all those in Europe which are

just being born, may joyfully catch the sacred tones, and chant together, as in chorus, the song of redemption, liberty and love, which is the song of truth, education and Christianity.

And now, in bringing this course of lectures to a close, it must have been apparent to all, that the need of *moral* culture is more and more felt as indispensable to the highest improvement and prosperity of our schools. Most happy am I to find the present thus telegraphing to the future. Let this Institute list so high the Christian standard, that every legislature in the land may read its heavenly motto.

And now, methinks, I hear the car of the nineteenth century, laden with the improvements in art, literature, science and religion, speeding its way towards us, with its breath of fire. It comes from the North; and it is the duty of this Association to see that it stops not until it has reached the extremest verge of our Southern continent. We trust it will pass through the capital of every State, to give to each legislature the opportunity of making its generous contributions. Thus laden, it shall acquire a momentum that will crush to atoms every opposing power. Shall we not welcome its coming? Yes! Let us hail it from our inmost hearts, and shout it along its way. Hear we not the noise of its wheels? Let it come—let it come. God give it speed. Clear the track; for the bell rings.



## LECTURE VIII.

---

### PRACTICAL EDUCATION.

---

BY W. C. GOLDTHWAIT,  
OF WESTFIELD, MASS.

---

SAID one of the ancient philosophers, when asked "What shall this young person learn?"—"Let him learn that, which will be of service to him, when he becomes a man." A noble reply! worthy not only of those dark ages, when the light of a pagan philosophy had to supply the want of the light of a pure Christianity, when to be educated was little more than to be ready for battle, but worthy of any age, worthy of being written in letters of gold on the walls of every school-room, on the lid of every writing-desk, nay, on the heart of every pupil, and parent, and teacher in our land.

The dark shadows of antiquity have in a measure passed away, and the doubtful teachings of a pagan philosophy have given place to the lessons of a sublimer system of faith; but the *spirit* of this remark shall never pass away.

Does the youth of any place or century ask, what it is to be educated?—the appropriate reply is in the sentiment of this pagan oracle: “Learn that, which will be practically useful to you, when you become a man.” And when we rise from matters of education to matters of religion, and are lost in the contemplation of the things of faith, and inquire, “What shall this heir of immortality learn?” the *spirit* of this noble reply, as truthful as was ever the response of soothsayer, or oracle, or prophet, is, “Let him learn that which shall truly dignify and bless him, when he passes into the shadows of the unseen world.”

The fear is sometimes expressed, that our present methods of discipline do not accomplish for the scholar, the man, all that might reasonably be expected. We admit that they accomplish much. They enlighten the common mind. They teach the great mass of community to read and write; and “old ocean’s gray and melancholy waste” does not separate so widely any two continents of earth, as the fact that one can read, and the other cannot, separates two nations of men. They raise the stature of manhood, and elevate the almost animals of other climes into the free, intelligent men of New England. And they assist powerfully in raising New England herself to that proud position, which to-day she occupies among the first, if she be not the first, of all the communities in the world in point of literary and moral privilege.

But though they may have accomplished all this, and are, for aught we know, nearer perfection than any system of common instruction in the world, yet we are safe in saying that they have not accom-  
-

ed one half what they ought, and many of the influences emanating from them are adverse to a manly growth. Do you ask for proof of this? Advert then to the fact, that with the great majority of instructors it is still the object, not to discipline, but to teach; not to

“nurse the tender thought  
To Reason, and on Reason build resolve;”

but to cultivate the memory, and teach the pupil to repeat, when he should reflect. In many of our prominent schools, teachers still cling to the question-asking, monosyllabic-answering method of instruction. Consequently it is endangering the truth but little to say, that pupils are taught subjects far less than books. It is often too true, that poorly-understood rules and dead words and phraseologies, constitute most of the treasure which the scholar brings home from his wide travel through the domain of letters.

The defect in our methods of instruction appears scarcely less obvious from an examination of our text-books, which, hardly less than teachers, give character to instruction. The defect is not in the number of books. In many departments there is already a perfect profusion, and if the reproductive power is not suddenly paralyzed, we may expect many more. Book-makers seem determined, like Neptune of old, if they cannot name and govern the land of Attica, to *flood* it. Many of these treatises are contrived on the presumption that to save the pupil from labor is to do him the greatest service. As pins and cotton cloth can now be manufactured

by machinery, so many authors seem to suppose that, in these modern times, eternal intellects can be expanded and moulded by helps, and rules, and forcing processes, and recitations, till the slight difference that once existed between disciplined and distended, seems to have become almost obsolete. Hence most of our books for the school-room come to us supplemented with keys, and margined with questions; all which seem contrived on the very presumption that the child knows little, and is to know little of the contents of those books; that they are either too deep for his comprehension, or too hard for his laziness. That noble and most practical ability, by which we are said to *extract* information from what we read, or study, or hear, as the laborer extracts gold from the ore, is but little cultivated. Until we have a new epoch in matters of education, Arithmetic and Grammar will remain the most important, as they are the most common branches of instruction. The design of the one is to discipline the mind; of the other, to clothe it with the ability to understand and employ language. But in the desire to make easy and saleable books upon these topics, both ends are frequently lost sight of. The object in these helps seems too frequently to be to simplify and lower the subject, rather than by stimulating to proper effort to raise the mind. What little of solid metal they contain, lies ready coined upon the surface; and then if any portion of the truth should inadvertently lie hid, the system of questions will disclose it without the trouble of seeking. Investigation therefore is superfluous. And if at any time the author challenges the pupil to a

search, the young disciple naturally supposes that the treasure that is dealt out with so free a hand, must be of little worth ; or if he fails to sink so low in his estimate of the truth, he will at least suppose that the author who buried it, or the teacher who too frequently acts merely as his substitute, will stand ready with an explanatory question, and soon cry out, like the clown in the fable, and disclose his own hiding place. Hence Arithmetic even, which for the young is calculated above all others to invigorate the reasoning faculties, is often so pursued that it paralyzes rather than strengthens them. Watts's "Hymns for Infant Minds" would be nearly as good ! Hence, too, the great secret of early education, that *the prime object of learning is to learn how to learn*, is most effectually lost sight of. There are among books many noble exceptions to these remarks ; but so far as our manuals of instruction partake of this labor-saving, question-asking, simplifying character, we say, miserable helpers all !

Many faults of this kind seem to characterize, and at the same time degrade our methods of instruction. If from these low grounds and vicious influences any rise to the hills and clear atmosphere of knowledge and refined taste, it is, too frequently, not because of their training, but in spite of it ; as in philosophy, while by the force of gravitation most bodies go down, some bodies, as balloons and vapors, by the same force go up.

But let us now perform a pleasanter part of our task, and turn from what education too frequently is, to what it should be. I do not now speak of physical

training, although I understand education to refer to, and include appropriately in its domain, the body, as well as the mind that dwells within the body—the altar, as well as the gift, and the flame that sanctify the altar. Nor do I speak of moral training, although that is unspeakably important—oh, how important! If the pupil is to live again “coeval with the sun,” some reference to his future state should find its way into the plans of every day of the teacher’s life. But I purposely pass by this, also, and speak now of the work of the teacher as the intellectual guide of the young.

And even here, in this segment of the field, there is room enough for the display of all our devotion and talent. When we remember (and oh, let us never forget!) that whatsoever is human is consecrated by the presence of an immortal spark of fire caught from the Deity, we shall be impressed with the thought, that the humblest human life, and the humblest trait of it, is worthy of all our care. The great conqueror of old wept, because, there being an infinity of worlds, he had not yet conquered one. Oh! how much better might we sit down after all our work, and weep that not a seed sown, not a trait developed, not a power disciplined, has grown, or can grow to maturity under these earthly skies! weep, did I say? nay, let us rather rejoice, that time is not long enough for any thing to grow to perfection,—that while we work here in these perishable walls, we are laying foundations, and rearing superstructures, that shall outlast the great globe itself.

It is sufficiently solemn to remember that each child

we train, is, Providence sparing his life, to be a man; a mind-possessing, a world-outlasting man; freighted with imperishable hopes, and a certificate of eternal existence from the great God of the universe himself. They are now lingering in the cool and early shade on the edge of the field of life. They wait your directing care, ere they go forth into the sun, and storm, and battle of life; and make a solemn and decisive throw in the game of destiny. We are often reminded that those we train may become rich men, and senators, and governors; but oh! how much more thrilling to remember that each child we educate is to stand up in the great army of living ones, a man, in God's image, with human sympathies, and attachments, and responsibilities,—that he is to love and be loved, to be a neighbor to somebody, a citizen, a friend, and either to honor or dishonor, act some part in the great drama of life.

But it is far more solemn to remember that each pupil, as has been already intimated, is in every thing that pertains to real manhood, perfectly immortal. The thought that sustains us amid the cares, and responsibilities, and depressions of this difficult business, is, that the impressions we make, and the discipline we secure, are to abide forever; and that in the future strength and progress of these candidates for eternal being, we are to hold a special, though it may be small proprietorship. Here are no contingencies of disappointed hopes and interfering providences. The life that now animates that speaking countenance, is watched and guarded, like the vestal fires of old, by eyes that never sleep, and hands that never

tire. The light of the sun shall sooner fail, nay, the very altars of the universe shall crumble and fall, ere one beam of that precious radiance shall be lost.

Are we then rearing to-day a fabric of discipline, a spiritual house, for the children of our care and adoption, laying its firm foundations in substantial knowledge, rearing its secure and immovable walls of solid acquisition, now inletting a window of clear and transparent thought, now stretching a beam of living and inflexible truth, and garnishing and bracing the whole with thoughts that breathe, and principles that never die? Then through all these spiritual chambers that we now build and garnish, (if the child is saved by grace,) sounds of more than mortal music shall ere long reverberate. Patriarchs of the old world shall go in and out across this threshold in free and easy intercourse. It is said of Peleus and Thetis in ancient fable, that of them alone, of all mortals, the gods came down and sang the marriage song; but here, far more than gods of pagan superstition, the very angels shall come in, and the accents of their sweet discourse, and the notes of their more than epithalamial song shall never die away from the spiritual house that we build and garnish. Shall we not be faithful then to these precious interests which heaven has committed to our care, and

“ Make the house where gods may dwell,  
Beautiful, entire and clean ”?

With such a career of hope and responsibility before him, the child may justly expect to be trained to meet these solemn issues. That system of training

that has not reference to the whole of his future being, and does not fit him for practical thinking and acting, is both unfit for him and unworthy of us. We stand as sponsors and god-fathers for every child we train, and when we lead the objects of our care up to the altars of knowledge, we seem to give solemn pledges for their future progress and success; and they may reasonably expect, therefore, that all our influences will fall upon their expanding natures, as the holy water of baptism falls upon the infant face, with earnestness, and benediction, and prayer. And not only the child demands it, but the interests of community demand it. If "England expects every man to do his duty" on the battle-field and the bloody deck, with how much better right may it be expected, that by a life of virtue and self-denying labor, every citizen will fill up his place in the ranks of living men!

And in this age of out-reaching sympathy and benevolence, the great world of mankind is understood to have a claim upon the talents, and influence, and gold of all. Be it in the self-denial of the missionary, or the retirement of the scholar, or the enthusiasm of the patriot—we are all expected to be, not merely conservators, but reformers and apostles, and, if need be, martyrs in the cause of truth. Humanity then sends in *her* claim, and most imperatively demands that we so train, and cause to be trained, the objects of our care, that when they emerge from the tutelage of parents and schoolmasters, they shall not appear on the registers of society simply because they are to receive its charity, or be visited by its rules; but because they are qualified to watch over and defend its

interests, and plant themselves at the rallying points in all times of emergency, like standard-bearers in a host. The child, then, and the community, and the world, all demand that his education be of a thorough, practical, and effective kind.

I know very well that a skepticism prevails among the men of our profession, as to what education can really accomplish; and so many influences blend, and in the detail, so many untoward attractions "turn the beam of calculation," that we sometimes underrate our own influence, and lose entirely the aid of that inspiring faith, that "sees the end from the beginning," and realizes that the work of to-day, has aided essentially in making the man of future years. We should beware of this despondency. It is true we cannot educate to perfection a whole school; so one beam cannot make a whole rainbow, or one voice a concord of sweet sounds; yet each beam and voice is necessary in its place. One man did not build the temple of Solomon; but they who wrought upon the pomegranates and the "carved work and open flowers," wrought none the less assiduously, as we may suppose, because they could not raise the walls and lay the roof. So let us remember, that if our part, minute though it be, is wrought unto perfection, we have the same proprietorship in the glory, as if we wrought the whole.

Neither let us despond, if, owing to untoward influences, we see at the present time but small fruit of our toil. We live in a system of things, where we shall be rewarded not according to what we accomplish, but what we attempt with resolution and high

hope. If we cannot make all noble men, let us remember that nature herself, with unbounded resources and skill, does not make all handsome faces, and perfect days, and fruitful seasons; but she enhances the value of the good, by setting it over in contrast with the bad. While we regret that all our pupils do not make high-minded citizens, let us remember, that but for our influence they might have made worse men. If we cannot make this child a philosopher, our influence may yet be indispensably necessary to save him from being a villain! If we cannot let a Washington in, the republic will be equally thankful if we can shut a Benedict Arnold out!

But let us ever keep in mind what education ought to, and sometimes does accomplish for the objects of its care. It comes to man, as he is bowed down in the willing slavery of ignorance, and bids him arise. It tells him that man was not made for the earth, but that the earth was made for man. Prometheus is said to have fashioned men of clay, and then touched them into life with a spark from heaven. What Prometheus did in fable to these statues of uninspired clay, when he touched them into life, and made the dead live, and the blind see, and the dumb speak,—education, such as we plead for, sometimes does for the natural man. It clears and brightens the dull eye. It makes the soul shine out through the coarse features. It opens the mouth to speak in glowing strains of what was despised or uncomprehended before. It takes the clown, “strong as an ox, and coarse as strong,” and transforms him into a noble, a

prince in mental estate. It finds him a block down among the rubbish; it makes him a "lively stone" in the temple. It gives him influence among men, for "knowledge is power." It lengthens his life, for it teaches him the noble art of living many years in one. To the uneducated man we all seem like mere appendages to this great earth; to the truly educated man this earth seems like a mere gymnasium, a playground for the spirit that walks thereon. He looks upon upheaving continents, and planets, and the march of the spheres, as hardly worthy to be accounted *illustrations* in the spirit's solemn history. It is hardly the language of figure, then, to say that education—thorough, practical, effective education, finds the man an insect that crawls upon the earth; it makes him a winged spirit that soars above it!

It remains for me now to point out, as briefly as I can, some of the traits of that practical education of which I speak.

First, then, it implies Intellectual Discipline. It may possibly seem strange to some that this is mentioned first. The common impression seems to be, that the mind is to be distended with knowledge, rather than braced by discipline. And much of our past instruction has been calculated to foster the idea that the child, like his own passive verb, is "to be acted upon." He is to be *taught* merely, and somehow, by the agency of talking and explanation, and, as it were, puncturing and rousing the dead flesh of ignorance with an interrogation-point, on the part of the teacher, and monosyllabic expressions of easy assent, on the part of the scholar, he can be raised to

intellectual life, and transformed from the child in his folly to a man in intellectual things. I need hardly say that this is a mistake in fundamentals; it is an error in doctrine. Do you, oh! teacher, suffer your pupil to learn *memoriter*? Do you allow him to suppose that he has mastered a subject, while he has to rely upon your questions in the recitation of it? Do you suffer him to proceed, for instance, in mathematics, without subjecting him to the habit of rigid analysis, and compelling him to see and assign unprompted, a reason for every step, without obliging him to construct his own rules, and thus *grow in discipline* every day? Then I know not what title to consideration you may have, based on other grounds; but I do know, that you can never raise the little company of your disciples to the Mount of clear vision, and make them strong-minded men; you are rather in the greatest danger of sinking them a thousand fathoms deep in the Dead Sea!

I understand that the great business of education is not to store the mind with knowledge of Geography, of Arithmetic, of History, and the like. It is not to make walking books—"encyclopedias on legs," as one better expresses it. Nor is it the proper design of education to fit the pupil for any particular branch of business, and make skillful weighers of hay and gaugers of beer barrels! Our business is not to make more expert merchants, but intellectually stronger men. It is to develope and discipline the God-given powers that lie within the realm of the human soul. This cannot be done by helps, and guides, and simplified processes; but by teaching the pupil how to

labor, how to think, how to investigate, and so by his own effort acquire strength. The maxim "by labor we are made strong," is as applicable here as elsewhere. "They that would have strength, must use it," say the laws of our bodily systems; "they that would acquire vigor of thought, must patiently apply themselves," say the laws of the intellectual. If you make it your aim to simplify and save from labor, though you may seem to hasten growth, you are only inflating infancy; you are not hastening manhood.

Intellectual manhood you cannot hasten by any such processes, any more than you can hasten the shadow of the sun on the solid dial-plate of the earth's surface. Our bodily forms, and oaks of the forest, and political systems, and mighty empires *grow*. They grow from within. So our intellectual natures must *grow*; they grow from slow assimilation, from solid acquisition, from the labor of thought; and oh! how often among the sons of genius and of fame, it has been the fruit of persecution, and difficulty, and trial! It is only after having been surrounded with obstacles, and assailed with battle, and rocked in the storm, that human souls grasp the sceptre of royalty. And all our attempts to make a strong and well-disciplined mind by question-asking, and lecturing, and talking, or any other method than simple thinking, are as futile as the attempt to make a strong oak by hanging garlands of flowers upon its trunk, or a mighty kingdom by constructing for it armies of buckram and palaces of paper.

If these views be correct, our duty is to direct attention more to the reasoning faculties (I speak not

now of moral training), and teach the pupil to investigate, to reflect; and we should esteem most highly those studies, and that system of instruction that result in making the pupil an independent, reflecting, thorough scholar. Whether he has *much knowledge* with this or not, is a thing of comparatively little consequence. Meditation is the key of all knowledge; if you put one who has acquired this power, with no other possession, on a barren rock on the fruitless bosom of the ocean, he soon will be rich, rich not only in mental discipline, but rich in the priceless treasures of knowledge; for neither earth, nor air, nor barren rocks, can long withhold their more than diamonds and rubies of knowledge from him who has acquired the magic of simple, patient thought. In accordance with these views, is the sentiment once expressed by an eminent friend of education: "If a young man at the close of his collegiate course should lose all the *knowledge* he had acquired, he would be to no great extent a loser, provided he retained his discipline of mind, and his power of acquisition."

The difference between the truly educated and the uneducated man, lies not in the fact that one has much knowledge, and the other less, but rather in the fact that one can think; the other cannot;—the one has the power of mental seclusion; the other has not;—the one can concentrate all his forces on a single point, and carry it; the other cannot;—the one can at will go down into the silent chambers of study, and heat them up like a vulcan's forge, and weld and twist the fragments of thought into whatsoever form

he pleases, it may be a polished shaft, or a thunderbolt, or shield ; the other *has* no chambers of silent meditation, and even with a furnace-heat, and golden fragments of thought, could fabricate nothing but cinders, and bombast, and smoke. Said Sir Isaac Newton, when asked the secret of his success : " If there is any trait in which I excel the rest of mankind, it is the habit of close application, and the patient examination of facts." So we may reckon, that, if we can send out our pupils vigorous thinkers, we have accomplished the great object of intellectual training. Whether they are called to the learned professions, or to follow the plough; whether they steer the noble ship, or drive the waxy awl; whether they sell meat in the shambles, or study the nature of 'tannin' in the vat, they will probably adapt themselves to their several places, as a lamp, when filled with oil and touched with flame, will dispel the darkness equally well in a great room or small, in a palace or hut.

If these remarks are true, we shall see that there is a great difference in the several branches of study. Some are for discipline, as Mathematics; some are for ornament, as Music and Drawing; some are mostly for information, as Geography, History and the like. The good teacher will regard this, and will also regard the wants of his pupils, and like a good physician, will recommend this study for discipline, and that for ornament, or recreation, or knowledge, as may be most likely to secure the speedy and perfect convalescence of his pupil from the imbecility of childhood. But oh ! let us never forget the needful Discipline, in our prescriptions ; without which, all

appearance of health and growth will be of little avail. Along this difficult ground we should teach the pupil where he should walk, and how he should climb; let him lean on our hand, and then gently withdraw our support, and so teach him to walk unsupported along the steps of this upward progress, with the graceful uprightness of a man. Need I say, that to discharge this our high trust, we need ourselves maturity of mind, and an easy familiarity with every step of the progress? Nay, more; he who undertakes the task of training the minds of the young, and is not himself well trained, betrays a more solemn trust than he who approaches the bedside of the sick, and knows nothing of physiology or medicine. Great interests are committed to our care and keeping. Solemn destinies are receiving their shape from the impress of our hand. The future happiness and dignity of these immortal ones demand, most imperatively demand, not only that we should set before them bright examples of what is lovely, and of good report in morals, but that we should strengthen them—strengthen them, I say, Intellectually; and lead them down from the hills of pleasure to the field of mental conflict, and teach them there by our example and our success how to bear the race, and how to win the prize.

But this is not all, though I think that it is most important. Another trait of this practical education is various and abundant Knowledge. I have already spoken of the claims of discipline, and the comparative claims of knowledge. But in meeting the responsibilities of life, to be practically educated, we

must be learned. The fault to which I have alluded, consists in making this the chief object of study. By so doing, like one who makes it his sole business to be happy, we fail of our purpose. We shall most certainly make the pupil in the end a learned man, if we bear in mind that our great business in the school-room is to cultivate the perceptive faculties, the imagination, and the taste, and discipline the thinking powers, and in a word, *teach him how to learn*. For the needful discipline is acquired by the study of the exact sciences, and the pages of philosophy, and the like. The perceptive faculties are cultivated by leading the pupil to observe whatsoever is calculated to awaken attention in his daily walks and studies; while that lovely trait, called the taste, finds its appropriate sphere alike in the world without, in the works of art, and in the contributions of literary men. Now all these pursuits lead us through the very gardens of knowledge, and if the memory does not sleep, while these other faculties wake and work, much of the most valuable information will be thus, as it were, incidentally acquired; as one cannot but gather much fragrance upon his garments, who walks, like an officiating priest, through a cloud of incense.

And then I admit that knowledge should be sought for its own sweet sake. When the mind is once awakened to healthy action, knowledge affords its most powerful stimulant and appropriate food. Hence it should be bestowed like nature's freest gifts, water and air. We should seek to diversify, nay, beatify the intervals of severe study in the school-room, with lectures, and facts, and tales, and illustrations. We

may expect, in a word, that the teacher will extend the knowledge of the pupil in every way. "Knowledge is power," has passed into a proverb among men, and all concede the importance of a well-stored and disciplined mind. Knowledge is more than a convenience in the business of life; it is indispensably important. We must have knowledge of the details of business, and the "marshalling of affairs," or we cannot be tolerable tradesmen or farmers. We must have knowledge of the power and use of language, or we cannot be influential citizens. We must have a knowledge of the world of mankind, and of many of the discoveries of science, or we cannot be agreeable companions, or exceedingly useful men. Hence, though it is by no means the main business of the teacher, he should improve every opportunity to pour in dear knowledge, and fill up all the chambers of the soul with the light of History, and Geography, and the like—as the sun, whose chief business seems to be to bind the earth to her orbit, and warm her bosom, also with his controlling and warming influence, pours down his cheerful beams, and illuminates every part of the otherwise dark planet, which he warms and controls by his influence. While, therefore, we seek to invigorate the thinking powers, and cultivate the taste, and enliven the fancy, we should also clothe our young disciples in the dress of knowledge, and write on every fringe, and phylactery, and headband, the maxims of truth and science; so that hereafter, if it be the will of God, they may stand like priests in white garments by the altars of knowledge.

But more than this is implied in the practical education of which I speak. It implies what is too often overlooked—the Power of Expression. So far as the world, or even the individual is concerned, it seems of little use to store the mind with knowledge, unless some way is devised by which a portion of this wealth can be communicated to others; otherwise the mind is merely a Dead Sea, that always receives and never gives. It is a principle in chemistry, that bodies that absorb caloric the best, do also radiate best; and it is equally true that those portions of the earth that absorb the most dew, do also send up most abundantly the herb, and grass, and flower. But somehow it has been discovered *here* that bodies may be made to absorb and never radiate; and the treasures of knowledge, and the fertilizing influences of instruction may be lavished upon a soil, and yet it will yield for the service of others no fruit or flower “after his kind.”

Hence it comes to pass that our school-rooms are filled with pupils who “know, but cannot tell!” They have the knowledge, but they cannot find it. They know just where it is, but like a thief’s honesty in the moment of trial, it is not there! This *genus* is a large one, and it deserves what editors call a “notice,” though I think not a “puff.” They have studied all science and art, and know every thing and yet know nothing. They seem to be well versed, and “ready to communicate,” so long as the question-asking teacher manages the “discharging rod.” They are so ready to *answer*, that they seem to overflow with knowledge; it is only kept in with some little constraint. But when without this assistance

they are called upon for an exposition of what they know, alas ! they suddenly find that their knowledge, like farewell emotions, "lies too deep for utterance." As it is said of some cutaneous disorders, it has "struck in ;" though I believe without producing any congestion at the centre ! But to drop the language of ridicule, we should remember that the pupil *does not know till he can tell.*

And we have *men* too, who, we may suppose, are well furnished so far as acquisitions are concerned ; but with all their gifts and treasures of knowledge, whenever they attempt to speak, like Galileans of old, their "speech bewrayeth them." By want of conformity to the suggestions of Rhetoric, they offend good taste, and perhaps sin against Grammar every time they invoke speech. And of those of whom this cannot be said, how many there are, not so gross offenders, who are, like Moses of old, "slow of speech," and who might confess like him, "I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant ; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Now these men, like the Midian shepherd and lawgiver, have knowledge enough ; men with far less have thundered in the senate, and given character to whole periods of human history. But, as one pleasantly observes, "they need to have some talking Aaron spliced on to them ;" for without the power of utterance, they seem to confess that they are but half men !

It seems to me that a portion of this difficulty lies in the fact that but little attention is paid to the power of expression. It was a facetious remark of one I

knew, that "our teachers take great pains to get knowledge into the head, and but little to get it out again." This points at a common fault in all our teaching; we pay but little attention to the channels of utterance, through which the fertilizing influences of knowledge should flow out upon the surrounding plains. Whether we aim merely to fill the mind with knowledge, or rise to a juster estimate of the business of education, and seek to discipline the mind, and develope the faculties, we seem often equally to fail in bringing out to a true and beautiful proportion this feature of a perfect education. That this is important, has already been intimated. I now say that it is *one* of the most important ends of training. The design of education is two-fold; it is first to make the individual a safer, happier, nobler man; and then to fit him for greater usefulness. With regard to the first, it is obvious to observe that nothing tends more to promote the happiness of the individual, than to impart of his good things to others. And if his wealth be that of the soul, it will also make him richer, and nobler, as well as happier. The sentiment of Scripture will doubtless occur to you, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth."

Whether it be in the matter of eloquence, or song, or the pleadings of that Christian charity that seeks to persuade men of the world to come, those who have preached, and sung, have felt the desire of utterance as a fire in their bones, and have rejoiced in the ability to *express* their emotions; and so in blessing others, they have been themselves twice blessed. As individuals, then, we need the power of expression.

And then in this impressible age, when the fortunes of men and empires shift as rapidly as the scenery of a dream, we should be qualified not only to display our treasures, and guard ourselves from wrong, and uphold the right, but to reproduce ourselves, and stamp our images deep in the impressible material of the living present. At the speaker's stand—in the pulpit—at the press—in the school-room—and indeed in all the walks of life—there are opportunities, such as were never enjoyed before, to carve out character, and predestinate the fortunes of those who are now coming on to the stage, and are yet to be. From the furnace of this ardent age seem to me in some sense to be now flowing those servid streams of influence, out of which are to be cast the destinies of long ages to come. On this warm and yielding material we are now called upon to make our impression, not in the scars and fire-marks of vice, but in outlines of grace, and lineaments of virtue, and emblems of undying hope. The part, then, that we are to act in the drama of life, also demands that we acquire the power of easy and vigorous expression.

How shall we accompllsh this? I reply :—We can do much by making it a distinct object of pursuit in the school-room and the higher walks of learning. It is said that herdsmen and men of the turf—those Jacobs, who have the care of Laban's cattle in modern times—can develope almost any given traits in the animal races, be it flesh, or size, or speed. Cannot we, who work in the most impressible of all materials in the world—the human soul—develope desirable traits? We often, alas! unwittingly develope unde-

sirable traits. Who has not seen the cross looks and peevish temper of the teacher and parent copied, as by a mirror (though we should say without *reflection*), in the face and disposition of the child? When the Rabbi begins to exhibit his fret-work, and growl prophetic of a coming storm, the gates of the Temple of Janus will most certainly fly open in the heart of every one of his little flock, and smaller growls will echo to the larger, as "face answers to face" in a brook. From an unbroken course of such treatment, who would expect any thing but an unbroken line of Nabals and Xanthippes? Can we not develope desirable traits as well? Can we not train the young and warm affections of the heart to flow out in the language of music and song? Can we not make the objects of our care utter forth their ideas by the appropriate signs of thought, and *converse* with ease upon what they know of science, and literature, and art? Nay, I need not ask that question; for nature herself teaches us to *express* what we feel. Hence we have language, which is arbitrary, it is true, in some of its modes, but universal, and, I presume, God-given. And when the artificial channels of thought clog up and overflow, we have shouts of joy and yells of pain, we have the compressed hand, and the speaking countenance, and the smile, and tear, the most eloquent of all language. The gladness of childhood outbreaks in the laugh, and our very pain registers itself in sobs and groans, and even the *dumb* animals rupture the bands of silence, and in their excess of joy fill the responsive air with music. Hence, too, men who most obey the impulses

of nature,—that great mistress of passion,—speak out in eloquence and song; and the great world of literature is full of what these passion-speaking sons of genius and of fame have said and sung. Doth not nature herself teach us this great lesson, that

“ thoughts shut up want air,  
And spoil like bales unopened to the sun !”

And then,—a sentiment which is too often overlooked now-a-days,—thoughts themselves acquire an additional distinctness from the very attempt to convey them; so that what we express to others, we do more clearly state and define to ourselves. Hence Lord Bacon says, “ Reading makes a full man, but conversation makes a ready man.” We sometimes *think* without much care in the arrangement of our thoughts; but we are seldom so without respect for others as to let our thoughts flow forth till they have been marshalled into regular order, and made to conform to the rules of syntax, if not of logic. When knowledge is in the most proper shape to be imparted to others, it is most fit to be kept by ourselves. As we shall not be likely to put it into this shape unless we are to convey it, we infer that nothing is more conducive to right learning than the habit of unfolding our acquisitions, and making them intelligible to others. Hence we say again, that in the training of the young, we should cultivate the power of expression, and teach the child not only to think, but to speak;—not only to acquire, but to convey. It is true, we may not make all our pupils poets and orators; it is not meet that we should. This world

would be neither desirable nor comfortable, with no one but poets and orators in it. It is of far greater consequence that we make them practical men, and teach them to speak with propriety upon common matters, and illustrate the rules and not the exceptions to good grammar in their ordinary discourse.

If these remarks are true, we may derive from them a suggestion which will be of great service to us in matters of intellectual culture. Are we teaching Arithmetic, the most important of the primary branches, or Grammar, or Geography, or any of the sciences? Let us not be satisfied, as too many are in this talking age, with simply *inculcating* truth, and creating an impression, as it were, by outward pressure. This is little better than writing a name in the sand. Our claim to consideration as teachers, lies in our ability to create an *internal activity* and warmth while the truth is presented. We are to see that ideas are received, as well as inculcated. In a word, the matter of any given lesson is to be so incorporated and familiarized, that it may be conversed about in easy and household language. Let us never suppose, then, that we can sufficiently test the solidity of our work by making a few unexpected thrusts at it with an interrogation point. Nor let us be satisfied when the pupil says that he has a clear idea of the subject. Nothing can be more fallacious. Most pupils have no conception of what it is to have a clear idea of any thing which has been to them merely a matter of study, any more than the blind have of color; these of course mean no disrespect to the truth in so saying; others are so averse to mental labor, that

they would impale the very goddess of truth for the purpose of concealing their ignorance. Hence the most sober and oft-repeated declarations on the part of pupils that they understand the matter in hand, are not to be assumed as proof that they do. That charity that "believeth all things," is out of place here. When we have explained a principle or topic, or assigned a lesson, we may justly expect the pupil to explain it, convey it, illustrate it, in language all his own, unaided by questions, unprompted by catch-words, or signs, or any thing but approving looks. If he has to wait for questions, let him wait a little longer and learn his lesson !

But one may inquire: Shall we never ask questions? Most certainly; if you would know the time of day, or the health of your pupil or friend, ask him. If you would know whether the pupil is familiar with a given fact or not, then ask him, to be sure; and if to test his knowledge of a required subject he is at times fairly besieged with interrogations, there is no harm. But do not, I beseech you, oh! teacher, allow your pupil to form the *habit* of depending upon printed or extemporaneous questions to aid him in communicating his thoughts. This habit is very easily formed, and is exceedingly common. I have often seen a vast amount of intelligence displayed by a class pursuing this method. The poor teacher was stating and illustrating most of the facts and principles—in a word, saying most of the lesson—and then asking their assent. This they readily gave, as they knew he must be right. In other cases, the teacher would state in his question an important part of the

idea, and then with the momentum thus acquired, allow the pupil to go on, till the friction against the sides of his narrow channels of thought brought him speedily to a state of rest; when the same force was applied again with similar results. To the unthinking observer, it might seem that such a class were well trained. But you will bear in mind that all the suggestion, and all the connection and arrangement of the ideas, and most of the ideas themselves, were supplied by another. What is left is of little worth. If from the knowledge and the ability to discourse upon any subject, possessed by a learned man, you were to take away in similar parts and proportions, there would be hardly material enough left to make a respectable dream upon that subject! Nothing can be more fallacious than the appearance of a class, when they only reply to questions. These periodic effusions of knowledge from the puncture of a question, are as unlike *real* recitation, and the easy flow of conversation, as the convulsive movements of a dead limb under galvanic influence are unlike the animated and graceful doings of real life. The great evil of this practice is, that it begets a corresponding habit of learning. Nothing is associated and made ready for conversational and practical use. Ask most of our pupils, as they leave their recitation seats, to detail to you what they have just been learning with regard to the 'rule of three,' or the Barbary States; and *keep quiet* while they make the awkward attempt, or rather do not make an attempt, to tell, and you will see that you might nearly as well have asked them respecting the librations of the moon, or

the quadrature of the circle. What little of knowledge they may have acquired, is left in undigested lumps; it will never assimilate and flow into the channels of ordinary discourse. It needs the force and prompting of a direct question to bring it out. If all our pupils could be made (as they ought) to *extract the ideas* from their text-books, and then narrate them in the recitation room, topic by topic, in an easy and conversational way, the difference in point of knowledge and discipline would be exceedingly great, and the gain in the power of expression would be by no means inconsiderable.

Let no one say that this is impossible; it is difficult—with pupils who have been falsely trained, exceedingly so; but perseverance will overcome the difficulty, and the fruits are glorious. You will often be surprised to see how the child will evade you and give you sound for sense, and repeat as nearly as possible the words of the book or verbal explanation, without at the same time conveying one particle of the living sense, that renders all language valuable. One method of circumventing him—you must allow me to use the expression—is to ask him to name some simple illustration, for instance of a principle in Arithmetic, or a figure in Grammar, and so give a tangible form, an act of incorporation to his ideas. If he abides this test, and it is only a fair test, you may conclude that he understands this point, and what has been learned to-day, will not have to be learned again to-morrow. Other methods may be called thorough teaching; that is not what the rising generation need; it is thorough learning. I know

not how a less rigid course than this can meet the wants of the pupil, and lay the foundation of a substantial discipline. But in so doing you will secure two things; one is a very thorough and abiding knowledge, and the other is that trait of which I speak, a power of expression, which is a most beautiful ornament, and of great service in the school-room, and while other things may be of more intrinsic worth, this will be to the pupil in all future life, what the lustre is to the star, or the transparency and polish are to the diamond.

But this is not all that I intend by Expression. The pupil should be able to *read* with great distinctness and propriety, whatever of prose or poetry lies within his comprehension. This is a most lovely, as well as useful exercise. The most common business often renders it necessary. And should a fondness for good literature call us to it, men of genius have been furnishing us with glowing pages for thousands of years. We are often invited to this exercise as a recreation in the school-room, in the society of friends, in public assemblies; where to say that we perform it well, is to say that we belong to the smallest and best educated class in community. He that reads perfectly, is almost perfectly educated. But every one acknowledges the importance of this; so I may pass this point without farther notice, more than to repeat a noble remark of one of New England's noblest scholars, that he would rather that his daughter would return from school able to read well, than able to play on the piano well. But there is one exercise which I lament to see so unfrequently practised; I

mean the *recitation* of appropriate selections of prose and poetry. I can only say with regard to this, that it seems to me a most efficient way of gaining control over the voice, that great organ of expression, and of refining the taste, and inspiring a fondness for the beautiful in the world of literature.

And as one method of expression, though it may not lie in the department of teaching, I must allude to the habit of *conversing* with ease and propriety, a habit, which, though it may not be acquired, may be greatly improved by practice. To say that a man converses well, is far more than to say that he declaims well. It is to say that he is an entertaining man, that he is for the time being at least, an agreeable friend and pleasant companion, that he has lively and entertaining thoughts, and above all, a lively and entertaining way of expressing those thoughts.

There is yet another method of expression too important to be overlooked: I refer to *composition*. Practice in this is appropriately the business of the school-room, and it betrays no want of candor to say that it receives far less attention than it deserves. The feeling of repugnance to this method of conveying thought seems to be almost universal, and, I suppose, is innate. Hence, many who can speak well, cannot write well. The rules of syntax and prosody appear to them so much more tyrannical in written than in spoken language, that they declare a perfect independence of them, and make it a practice, if not a virtue, to outrage them all. Hence a few pages of hieroglyphics in ink, and a few ungraceful letters, are

frequently all that early education contributes, either to literature or friendship. Hence many a young man enters (shall I say leaves?) college, and multitudes, alas! enter the walks of life, to whom it would be a great burden, and, perhaps, an impossibility, to cover a page with well-written thoughts. This ought not to be; a great amount of pleasure is lost to the individual, and most precious opportunities of exerting influence are thrown away. All who are set as patrons and guides of the young, should look to this, and see that while they learn other things, they also learn this most important thing, and early become able to use the *pen* with elegance, or at least with correctness and ease. It is said of one of the German poets, that he was "powerful with the sword and pen." I know not exactly in what state of society he lived, the warrior and poet; but I do know, that in these places and times, the pen is mightier than the sword. I know the task is a great one; but I verily believe that most of our pupils may attain to some proficiency, and perhaps excellence in the use of that, which has wrought greater revolutions, and battered down more walls of prejudice, ramparts of error, than battleaxes, and swords, and all the engines of war. These are some of the methods of expression; time forbids our mentioning more.

It is plainly our business, then, as teachers, together with the needful discipline, to store the mind with the priceless treasures of knowledge, and lay up the more than wedges of gold and heaps of diamonds for future use. And oh! let us never forget, that it is also a part of our business to fit these treasures, so

far as we can, for the noble commerce and interchange of thought, and make the soul of the pupil, not a chest to hoard his wealth, but a mint to coin it; so that every thought, though it may have been gathered up from newspaper edges and torn leaves, or caught warm from living lips, or quarried out in the blissful agony of study, may go out into the great mart and exchange of undying thought again, with its original fineness of virgin gold, and also with a clear and beautiful "image and superscription" upon it, to show that it has been coined afresh in the treasure-house of the soul.

Another, and the last element of this practical education which I shall mention, is Refined Taste. I doubt not you will wonder at the mention of this trait, and you will be ready to say that your practical education is after all just as *practical* as the dreams of the South Sea, or the theories of a contemplated north-west passage. But I must say that this is necessarily comprehended in my idea of a practical education. What is practical but what is good? What is so really substantial and durable, as the holy and the beautiful, of which, especially of the beautiful, it is the office of taste to take cognizance? What is really serviceable, that does not directly or indirectly exalt and embellish life? What is truly utilitarian that does not make us nobler and happier men here, and more likely to climb the ladder of destiny to a seat in paradise hereafter? Now we presume to say that knowledge and refined taste, to a great extent, is, and does all this. Instead of piles of filth and broken windows, it surrounds the home of the peasant

with the appearance of thrift, with woodbines and beds of flowers. It makes wealth itself doubly rich. When exhibited in the artisan, in the servant, in the *slave* even, it tends to dignify common existence, and throw a charm around the details of this otherwise wearisome and petty business of life.

And shall I be accused of heresy, if I say that refined taste, and the cultivation of the heart tends to brighten our hopes for the future? I do not mean to say that there is any thing regenerating in the influence of taste and knowledge; by no means. But their presence tends to soften the asperities of life, and open the heart, so far as earthly means can, for the entrance of that faith that saves. I know that these endowments of the mind are often abused; so discipline is often abused; so wings, that were made to soar in paradise, may be, nay, have been dragged in the slime of the bottomless pit. And on the other hand, there are many who are low in taste and knowledge, and yet high in grace. But I regard these as the exceptions, and not the rule. And I firmly believe that the general diffusion of knowledge, and the cultivation of the graces of life, and the prevalence of correct taste, are favorable to good morals, and the spread of true piety. If any one supposes that piety has any natural affinity to vulgarity, and that ignorance and grace are offspring of the same parentage, then let him adopt and carry out his creed, while I shall ever believe with the poet, that,

“ *From purer manners to sublimer faith,  
Is nature's unavoidable ascent.* ”

And we believe that at the fireside, and in the school-room, one prominent design of early training should be to cultivate these "purer manners," of which the poet speaks, and develop this faculty, the exercise of which softens life, and engenders courtesy of demeanor, and tends to shut out low vice, and give to peasants the manners of princes. Being himself a man of correct taste, the teacher can do much by his example. He can read to his pupils, and with them, from the "treasured volume," and

"lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The music of his voice."

These volumes, the legacy of departed poets, and living ones, are full of the very gems of thought, set in all manner of precious work. The pupil may, and should be encouraged to commit these passages to memory, and recite them to the teacher and the school; and so his taste will be formed on the best models. In a word, by frequently calling the attention of his school to whatsoever is calculated to excite emotions of pleasure in books or in the world without, the living teacher may do much to make himself felt and remembered, like good old Master Pemberton, as a man of correct taste and tender feeling.

And if successful only to a limited extent in developing this trait to which I refer, how unspeakable the benefit he confers upon the pupil! To the man of uncultivated and vulgar associations, this world appears like a mere field of labor, along whose dusty avenues of business the wheels of life roll with slow and wearisome motion; or at most, like a place of low and thoughtless entertainment, where all crea-

tures are to hold the goblet to sense and appetite ; to the man of cultivated associations, it seems like a palace, a temple, full of helps to worship, and covered all over, like the walls of the old temple on Mount Zion, with "carved work and figures of cherubim and open flowers."

Now the fact is, that around this beautiful world of ours, wherever the sunshine and rain come down, there upspring the most charming sights, and awake the most delightful sounds ; so that in Spring with its blossoms, and Summer with its fruits, and Autumn with its forest fringe-work of purple and gold, the whole earth seems to me more like the place of a millennium, or a district on the Delectable Mountains, in the land of Beulah, of which Bunyan speaks, than it does like a mere house of life, a workshop, a field to dig in, and at last be buried in. It is my faith that the sun pours down his golden beams by day, and the moon rolls her tides of melted silver over these sleeping hills by night, and the clouds distil their fragrant drops, and the earth covers herself with blossoms, with wind-flowers and violets and cowslips and roses, and puts on the dress of a happy bride in the Spring, and then of a dying saint in the Autumn, for some great and good purpose ; and I suppose that purpose to be simply that we may admire these things, and above all, see in them emblems of that land of heavenly promise, where

“everlasting Spring abides,  
And never-fading flowers.”

And not only in the world without, but in the world of literature, is there much to gratify the most

refined taste. Nature shines and sings without, and calls upon us with her thousand voices to praise Him from whom all blessings flow ; but the glorious genius of God's creatures shines forth hardly less illustriously in the creations of the cultivated mind. Much that poets have said and sung, and men of genius have committed to the keeping of faithful posterity, is the source of the most exquisite pleasure to those who can read aright. What these men have said—the poets, and orators, and sages—is but a reflection from the world without ; it has been endorsed by time, and bids fair to go down to the very end of human history as almost divine. Now I know not how it may be with others, but I am thankful for the exhibitions of beauty around me ; and I am equally thankful for the literature we have in books, that knows no vicissitude of season, or change of interest, no fading or departure at night, no decay in Autumn, but always breathes with the freshness of perpetual Spring.

From all these sources of innocent pleasure shall the young child be excluded ? nay, of these fountains of delight shall he be permitted to remain in ignorance ? If he is guilty of wrong who defrauds the orphan of his property or right, shall he be considered less guilty of wrong, who keeps the young student from the pleasures of refined taste ? No trait is more easily developed ; indeed, the exercise of it seems almost spontaneous in the child, and in the unhardened spirit of manhood. It finds its appropriate objects in every science, in every study ; abroad, and in the house ; in the field of labor, and in the works of art ;

in the human form and "face divine," and in the hardest rock ; in the mechanism of the smallest animalculæ, and in the machinery of planetary systems. Every child seems a naturalist, and a poet in every thing but utterance, from his very birth ; he loves flowers and stars and birds, and manifests an undecaying interest in every change in the great kaleidoscope of nature, which we, wiser men, suffer to pass by unnoticed, because we are used to them. These delicate perceptions are too often blunted by the untoward influences of early education, and the inquisitive and sensitive child grows into a practical, but untasteful and inattentive man. And we carry these acquired habits of inattention and stupidity so far, that I verily believe that most men of our sordid race would stand by their cribs, and furrows, and money drawers, and plod and barter on, while a full burst of music was pealing from the choir of heaven ! At least the great multitude *do* walk almost unmoved in the midst of the most surprising exhibitions of wisdom and grace. Summer suns and the gorgeous blazonry of stars and the inspiration of the solemn night, shed over us their shadows and their light, and yet we heed it scarcely more than the dead heed the fragrance of living flowers, that blossom upon their graves : all, as I conceive, for the want of that which I shall make the last element of a practical education, that is, a refined taste.

Other traits I might mention, but time forbids. These are some of the more important ends we should seek to gain in our intellectual training ; and if we gain all these perfectly, we shall need no other chroniclers ; our works will praise us ! I am well aware

that I have pursued a different course in these remarks from what would be naturally suggested by the mention of Practical Education. A more frequent mention of "loss and gain," and ledgers, and policies, and yards of tape, would have reduced this formula to one containing far less unknown quantities and negative signs. But though I do not forget or despise our dependence upon the gross and material, though I remember that food is as indispensable as knowledge, and that it is quite necessary oftentimes to manage our pecuniary affairs with other men according to the "rule of three where more requires more," though it seems to me far better to understand the details of business than to discourse merely upon high philosophy, and in a word, though we should make our pupils eminently *practical* men, yet I am persuaded that the great business in the school-room and academy and college, is to train up well-disciplined minds, and refined tastes, and endow our pupils with a knowledge of the sciences and the principles of things, and clothe them with the power of elegant and forcible expression, which shall be "for glory and for beauty" around all the possible occupations of future life, rather than to fit them for any special and private emergency of business.

And I believe that this is not only practical but possible. Dr. Rush expresses the idea that "mothers and school teachers sow the seeds of nearly all the evil in the world." If he had added fathers to the list of misdoers, the triangle would have been nearly equilateral. But if parents and teachers are so efficient for evil, as the Doctor supposes, they may also be efficient for good. I am not one of those Utopian

dreamers, that suppose that the potency of the common school system, or any other system can convert a soul, and much less regenerate the world, and bring in the Millennium; but I do suppose that if every member of our profession were thoroughly endowed with the qualifications for his office, and had sound and correct views of education, and would embody those views in his practice; and if parents, who are far more efficient for good or evil than we, would unite with us, and train the child as they ought, and bring him into an atmosphere of refinement and taste, and open his young spirit by proper instruction, and by example draw him up, instead of dragging him down; if they would converse with him on suitable themes, and in a suitable manner, and above all, if he could be subjected from the first to a correct moral and religious training, I believe that God's gracious influence would coöperate with ours, nay, would overrule and employ ours, and we should witness far different and more illustrious results than at present. There might be obstinate cases and dark exceptions as now, that would infuse a skepticism into the strongest faith; but it seems no idle dream of the fancy to suppose, that in that more than Augustan age of correct moral and intellectual training, almost every time that a human spirit flew in at one of the eastern windows of life, these various influences would successfully unite

“ To give the world assurance of a Man.”

---

ERRATA.—Page 33, 13th line from bottom, for are, read is.

“ 56, 8th “ “ top, for Clodias, read Clodiuses.

“ 58, 6th “ “ for our, read an.







